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JOHN RANDOLPH

From the portrait by Gilbert Stuart, Corcoran Art Gallery, Washington, D. C.

JOHN RANDOLPH

OF ROANOKE

[illegible]

BIOGRAPHIC [illegible]

[illegible]

WILLIAM [illegible]

[illegible]

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN [illegible]

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME I

G. P. Putnam's Sons
New York & London
The Knickerbocker Press
1922

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PREFACE

The author believes that he need make no apology for writing another biography of John Randolph of Roanoke. The only book deserving of the name is the *Life* by Hugh A. Garland, a native of Virginia, but, during his last years, a member of the Bar of St. Louis. Garland was old enough to have heard Randolph on the hustings in the latter part of Randolph's career, and, as a student at Hampden-Sidney College, and otherwise, he also enjoyed invaluable opportunities for collecting material relating to his subject from persons whose lives had been contemporaneous with that of Randolph. Moreover, he had had access to some important letters from Randolph to Randolph's intimate friends, Francis Scott Key and Dr. John Brockenbrough, which have now been lost or destroyed. Some blemishes of overtaxed rhetoric, high-flown sentiment and biographical infatuation aside, the praise can not be withheld from Garland of having written a valuable book, thoroughly patriotic in spirit, despite its extreme State-Rights bias, luminous in its exposition of the political issues of Randolph's time, though occasionally wandering off too far into general history; and (to mention still another consideration which, after all, determines the final fate of every such book) distinctly readable. But Garland's *Life* was published as long ago as 1850, and since that time a great mass of material relating to Randolph, which was either unknown or inaccessible to him, has come to light, and has freely been used in the present work. In-

cluded in this material, are the Diary and other journals of Randolph, and numerous letters written by him to St. George Tucker, his step-father; Fanny Bland Coalter, his sister; Elizabeth T. Coalter, his niece; Joseph H. Nicholson, James M. Garnett, Francis W. Gilmer, Nathan Loughborough and Littleton Waller Tazewell, all intimate friends of his; John Randolph Clay, his protégé; Andrew Jackson, James Monroe and many other persons; to say nothing of the great number of letters written to or about Randolph which were also either unknown or inaccessible to Garland. Indeed, apart from a few early letters, no letters of any importance written by Randolph appear to have been available to Garland for the purposes of his task except the very valuable ones which Randolph wrote to Key and Dr. Brockenbrough.

The biography (so-called) of Randolph by Lemuel Sawyer is but a mere memoir; though by no means negligible, because Sawyer served for many years in the House of Representatives with Randolph, and, while sharing the prejudice against him, felt by all the fervid Jeffersonians, after the breach between him and Jefferson, was an ardent but not an indiscriminate admirer of Randolph's genius; and was an admirer, in many respects, of his character too. But, even if Sawyer's book were a much more extensive one, he had a failing which is enough to destroy, or all but destroy, the value of any book, brief or otherwise; that is, gross inaccuracy. He was, we are told by John Quincy Adams, a writer of poems and plays, as well as a Congressman, and no playwright or poet ever deliberately took more license with historical facts than Sawyer did in the loose statements of his memoir.

The *Reminiscences of the Home Life of John Randolph of Roanoke* by Powhatan Bouldin contains much contemporary testimony about Randolph of the highest importance, but, as its title indicates, its scope is limited. Moreover, its value is very much diminished by the cir-

cumstance that its author lacked the requisite training for sifting and weighing evidence, and wholly failed to make any allowance for the fact that much of what he details on the strength of country-side gossip about the habits and conduct of Randolph is, even if true, referable to a period when, in the judgment of a judicial tribunal, Randolph was utterly insane.

The chapters on Randolph in James Parton's *Famous Americans* are very agreeably written, as is everything that Parton ever wrote; though deeply jaundiced by the sectional feelings of the Civil War Period; but they constitute, after all, only a critical essay.

The same thing is true of the chapters on Randolph in J. G. Baldwin's *Party Leaders* and Prof. R. H. Dabney's *John Randolph, a Character Sketch.* There are besides some brief sketches of Randolph by other hands, but they are so plainly outside of the field intended to be occupied by this book that they need not be further mentioned here.

The book about Randolph that probably has the widest currency at this time, partly because it is one of the American Statesmen Series of Houghton, Mifflin & Co., and partly because it was written with the literary skill which marks all the productions of its author, is the *John Randolph* of Henry Adams. If this book is not simply the essence of Garland's two volumes strained off, *réchauffé*, and sprinkled with the usual contents of the Adams salt-cellar and pepper-box, it is only because Henry Adams had at his command letters from Randolph to Gallatin, Monroe and Nicholson which Garland did not. In its pages, he has fully availed himself of the opportunity that it afforded him to direct against the memory of Randolph the thrice-refined venom in respect to its subject which had filtered into his own veins from those of his great-grandfather, grandfather and father. The book is really nothing but a family pamphlet, saturated with the sectional

prejudices and antipathies of the year 1882; and why its author should have been selected to write a biographical essay on Randolph is one of those questions which it is just as well not to ask in the year 1922.

We have spared no effort to make the present biography complete, and, if there is any source of information about Randolph, to which we have not resorted, it has not been because of any lack of diligence on the part of the author.

So far as we know, the only unpublished letters from the hand of Randolph that have escaped us were a number written by him to his friend, the Hon. Harmanus Bleecker, of Albany, N. Y., which were sold about the year 1913 by Pierce and Scope, the well-known dealers in such things, 59 Maiden Lane, Albany. These we have been unable to trace, though we have made an earnest effort to do so.

Our cordial acknowledgments for assistance in the preparation of this book are due to the Rt. Rev. Beverley D. Tucker, Norfolk, Va.; Hon. Henry St. George Tucker, Lexington, Va.; Mr. George P. Coleman, Williamsburg, Va.; Mr. John Stewart Bryan, and Dr. St. George Tucker Grinnan, Richmond, Va.; Rev. C. Braxton Bryan, Petersburg, Va.; Miss Nina S. Grinnan, Woodberry Forest, Va.; Mr. J. C. Grinnan, Norfolk, Va.; Mr. Randolph Bryan Grinnan, Norfolk, Va.; Dr. Randolph B. Carmichael, Washington, D. C.; Miss Virginia Lucas, Charlestown, W. Va.; all descendants of Judge St. George Tucker, and kinsfolk of John Randolph, through the marriage of his mother to her second husband, Judge Tucker; also, to the Hon. Geo. J. Hundley and Mr. J. M. Lear, Farmville, Va.; Dr. Lyon G. Tyler, Williamsburg, Va.; Miss Addie C. Venable and Prof. A. J. Morrison, Hampden-Sidney, Va.; Mr. R. Bolling Willcox and Mrs. J. Spooner Eppes, Petersburg, Va.; Judge William Leigh, Danville, Va.; Mr. Wm. Leigh, Houston, Halifax County, Va.; Mr. Malcolm G.

Bruce, Berry Hill, Halifax County, Va.; Mrs. Mary Watkins Leigh Taliaferro, Clarksville, Va.; Mr. H. B. Chermside, Charlotte Court House, Va.; Mr. A. T. Howard, Cumberland County, Va.; Dr. C. A. Graves and Dr. Philip A. Bruce, University of Virginia; Mr. J. H. Whitty, Mr. H. J. Eckenrode, Mr. Langborne M. Williams, and Mr. W. D. Scott, Richmond, Va.; Mr. Theodore S. Garnett, Norfolk, Va.; Mr. John B. Harvie, Roxboro, N. C.; Mr. Briscoe B. Bouldin, Greensboro, N. C.; Dr. James Douglas Bruce, University of Tennessee; Mrs. Leigh Robinson, Miss Caroline Loughborough, the Hon. Charles Morelle Bruce, and Mr. Gaillard Hunt, Washington, D. C.; Mrs. Admiral Edward Simpson, Mrs. Henry J. Bowdoin, Mrs. Norman James, Mr. Littleton Waller Tazewell, Jr., Mr. J. Mercer Garnett, Jr., Mr. McHenry Howard, Mr. Harold Randolph, Mr. John Randolph Bland, and Mr. Blanchard Randall, Baltimore, Md.; Dr. Wm. M. Dabney, Ruxton, Md.; Mrs. John Ridgley, Hampton, Md.; Mr. C. Howard Lloyd, Wye, Talbot County, Md.; Mr. William Beebee, New York City; Mr. S. L. Parrish, Southampton, L. I.; Dr. Wm. E. Dodd, University of Chicago; Mrs. Gilbert S. Meem, Seattle, Washington, and Sir Grey H. D'C. Skipwith, Honington Lodge, Warwickshire, England.

We also owe our warmest thanks for aid rendered to us in one form or another by Mr. Herbert R. McIlwaine, Librarian of the Virginia State Library, Richmond, Va.; Mr. Wm. G. Stanard, Corresponding Secretary of the Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, Va.; Rev. Thomas C. Johnson, Librarian of the Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Va.; Mr. Samuel E. Lafferty, of the Peabody Library, Baltimore, Md.; the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress; the Philadelphia Library; Mr. H. M. Lydenberg, Reference Librarian of the New York Public Library; the New York Historical Society; Mr. Julius H. Tuttle, Assistant Librarian of the Massachusetts His-

torical Society; Mr. Clarence S. Brigham, Librarian of the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Mass., and Miss Evelyn Gilmore, Librarian of the Maine Historical Society.

W. C. B.

BALTIMORE,
Feb. 2, 1922.

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John Randolph of Roanoke

John Randolph of Roanoke

CHAPTER I

Birth and Ancestry

John Randolph of Roanoke was born at Cawsons, in Prince George County, Virginia, the home of his maternal grandfather, Theodorick Bland, Senior, on June 2, 1773.[1] If evidence, unsupported by original testimony, may be trusted, the house in which he was born might well have been classed with those colonial mansions in Tidewater Virginia, which excited the admiration of even such a foreign observer as the Marquis de Chastellux.[2] It contained, it is said, not less than thirty apartments,[3] and was set off by grounds adorned with shrubbery, serpentine walks and other artificial embellishments.[4] However this may be, it is no longer standing either to confirm or to gainsay the conspicuous character ascribed to it; for many years after it had ceased to be the property of the Blands it suffered the fate which has reduced to ashes so many storied houses in the region of open, screenless fireplaces and careless negro servants which stretched from the James River to the North Carolina boundary.[5] (*a*)

As the tradition goes, the master of the place, at the

[1] *Life of Josiah Quincy*, by Edmund Quincy, 351.
[2] *Travels in America*, v. 2, 151, 162.
[3] *Bland Papers*, Introd., ix. (note).
[4] *Life of John Randolph*, by Hugh A. Garland, v. 1, 2.
[5] *Bland Papers*, Introd., ix. (note).

time of the conflagration, was seated at dinner with a large company of guests when a servant entered the room and announced that the building was on fire. The intelligence was received by the well-bred host with unruffled composure, and, pausing only long enough to order the flames to be put out, he begged his friends not to be disturbed by a matter to which his servants would give their prompt attention. But, in this instance, as in many others under the old Virginia slave conditions, it was much easier for the master to pass on a thing ceremoniously or otherwise to his black household than to have it effectively done after it had been passed on. For a time the wine continued to circulate but not so fast as the fire, and the result was that the whole convivial gathering soon found itself bundled out of doors by smoke and heat.[1]

But the mansion was seated on the east bank of the Appomattox River, near the point where this stream pours its waters into the James, and on a high plateau which overlooked the glistening expanse formed by the blended currents of the two rivers; and this site still remains to evidence the rare privilege enjoyed by the inmates of Cawsons in an outlook which took in, with a single grasp of the vision, Shirley, the ancient seat of the stately and profuse hospitality dispensed by the Carters, Bermuda Hundred and its shipping, City Point and some other prominent land objects, and, above all, the sheet of water just mentioned, which John Randolph himself, as we shall presently see, in one of his letters to Josiah Quincy termed, and justly termed, "noble."[2] Proofs are not wanting in the life of Randolph that he was keenly alive to the grandeur and beauty of the physical universe, and it was in keeping with the imaginative and emotional organization of mind and heart, which afterwards led the world to pronounce him, whatever else he might be, a man of

[1] *Bland Papers*, Introd., ix. (note).
[2] *Life of Quincy*, 351.

genius, that his birth should have had such a congenial local origin.

And there are few birthplaces in the United States, it may be added, invested in so high a degree with the interest that attaches to an historical environment. The locality, of which Cawsons was a feature, belongs to the territory that Lyon Gardiner Tyler has aptly termed *The Cradle of the Republic.*[1] Thirty miles or so across the James, are the ruins of Jamestown, the first permanent roof-tree established by Anglo-Saxon institutions and manners within the present limits of the United States. At practically the same distance, is Williamsburg, the Colonial Capital of Virginia, and the heart of the Society, so often honestly misconceived and so often dishonestly misrepresented, which, despite the ignoble sloth, the frivolous dissipation and the depraved self-indulgence attributed to it by those who either do not love it or do not understand it, contrived somehow to achieve the monstrous paradox of producing what even Henry Adams, one of its harshest critics, admits to be "the greatest list of great names ever known this side of the ocean."[2] On the north side of the James above Jamestown is Malvern Hill where Lafayette encamped shortly before the capitulation of Cornwallis at Yorktown, which itself is only forty miles or so from the site of Cawsons, and where McClellan, driven to the water's edge, succeeded, by a desperate exertion of deadly energy, in shaking himself free from his pursuers. A little higher up stream are Curles' Neck, where the masterful rebel, Nathaniel Bacon, Junior, the 1676 precursor of 1776, resided, and the Dutch Gap Canal where General Benjamin F. Butler, during the closing hours of the Civil War, "bottled himself up," as Grant, in his pithy way, phrased it. Immediately under the eye of Cawsons, as we have

[1] *The Cradle of the Republic* (1900).
[2] *John Randolph*, 4.

seen, is City Point, where General Phillips disembarked when, with the aid of the traitor, Arnold, he proceeded to harry the bowels of Virginia with sword and torch, and where Grant had his headquarters when the State-Rights cause, of which Randolph had been the ever-faithful Abdiel, had become hopelessly involved in the coils of its inexorable fate. Richmond, the capital of the Southern Confederacy and for four bloody years of fratricidal strife the invincible citadel of the State-Rights conception of the Federal Constitution, is only about twenty miles off. Petersburg, where the Army of Northern Virginia, assailed by the fury of Talbot's three attendants, "lean famine, quartering steel and climbing fire," made its last real stand, is only about ten or twelve miles off. Manifestly, whether we look backward or forward from the date of Randolph's birth, the spot where, to use his own sad words, he was "ushered into this world of woe,"[1] was part of a background as vivid and significant as any that the history of the New World—once new, but now also growing old and ashen in its turn—can afford.

Just how John Randolph came to be born at Cawsons instead of at the home of his parents, which was at Bizarre, near Farmville, on the Appomattox River, in Cumberland County, about eighty-eight miles above Petersburg, and not far from the scene of the surrender at Appomattox, we do not know. Perhaps, on the eve of his birth, his mother was drawn there by the natural impulse which so often, under such circumstances, impels a wife, who is as "ladies like to be who love their lords" (to borrow a delicate paraphrase employed by him in one of his letters to his cousin, Theodore Dudley),[2] to seek the parental roof. Or, perhaps, she was influenced by the desire at such an anxious time to be as near as possible to her brother, Dr. Theodorick Bland, Junior, who had acquired his medical

[1] Letter to Francis Scott Key, May 20, 1814, Garland, v. 1, 2.

[2] Mar. 12, 1817, *Letters to a Young Relative*, 199.

education abroad and was living at Kippax, or Farmingdale, in Prince George County. If the latter surmise is well founded, in gratifying this desire she was really inviting additional, instead of averting existing, risks, we should say, in the light of a letter from Dr. Bland to her, dated August 29, 1771, in which he tells her exactly what should be done to cure her husband of "a bilious remittent, something of the inflammatory kind which, had he been bled once pretty plentifully in the beginning, would have intermitted perfectly." The lancet, "glyzters," "manna," and cream of tartar, ipecac, "chameemile" tea, cupping or leeching, rhubarb, vitriolated tartar, barley water, gum arabic, "huskey jockey," penny-royal water, blisters, "barke" and immersions of the patient up to his armpits, in a tub of warm water with vinegar in it, make up, with some other forbidding recommendations, the restorative treatment that the doctor believed to be indicated by the facts in the case.[1] His leading thought evidently was to expedite the exit of the disease by opening up as many active channels of egress for it as possible. The father of John Randolph survived both his malady and his doctor on this occasion, but he certainly could not say of himself as his famous son is reported to have long afterwards said of one of his favorite servants, when he was informed that this servant had died too unexpectedly for a doctor to reach him before his death: "Then he had every chance for life!"[2] It is only fair, however, to note that Dr. Bland did advise the use of "barke," which, in the refined form of quinine, is what a physician would administer at the present time for a "bilious remittent."

We are told that John Randolph was frequently at Cawsons with his mother during his early childhood[3]; but,

[1] Bryan MSS.

[2] "John Randolph, A Sketch," by the author, *Va. University Mag.*, Oct., 1879, 33.

[3] Garland, v. I, II.

so far as we are aware, he never revisited the place but once after he became of age. This was in 1814 when the melancholy sensations which we all feel on finding ourselves after many years of absence again amidst the early scenes, which, as Byron says of the "school-boy spot" of our youth, "we ne'er forget though there we are forgot," were, in his case, intensified both by the inveterate prepossessions which he ever entertained in favor of the Old Unreformed Virginia and the rebuff to which he had recently been subjected at the polls in his Congressional District.

"I made a little excursion last week," he wrote on March 22, 1814, to Josiah Quincy, "to the seat of my ancestors in the maternal line at the confluence of James and Appomattox Rivers. The sight of the noble sheet of water in front of the house seemed to revive me. I was tossed in a boat for three miles and sprinkled with the spray that broke over her. The scenes of my early youth were renewed. I do not wonder at the attachment of you New England men for your rocky shores and inlets and creeks—that you cleave to them heedless of the siren song that calls you to the western wilderness. The sight of the broad bay, formed by the junction of the two rivers, gave a new impulse to my being; but when the boat struck the beach, all was sad and desolate. The fires of ancient hospitality were long since extinguished, and the hearth-stone cold. Here was my mother given in marriage, and here was I born; once the seat of plenty and cheerfulness, associated with my earliest and tenderest recollections, now mute and deserted. One old gray-headed domestic seemed to render the solitude more sensible."[1]

Then, after a word about Robert Bolling, the founder of the Bolling family in Virginia, and the armorial bearings and epitaph on his tombstone, the writer goes on:

"Nothing, however, can be more melancholy than the aspect of the whole country on Tidewater—dismantled country

[1] *Life of Quincy*, 351.

WILLIAM RANDOLPH OF TURKEY ISLAND

From the original in the Collection of Edward Carrington Mayo, Richmond, Va.

seats, ruinous churches, fields forsaken and grown up with mournful evergreens, cedar and pine."

Of the same tenor was a letter written by Randolph to Francis Scott Key two days earlier in which he further said:

"The very mansions of the dead have not escaped violation. Shattered fragments of armorial bearings and epitaphs on scattered stone attest the piety and vanity of the past and the brutality of the present age."[1]

It is obvious from Randolph's letter to Quincy that the house at Cawsons was still standing in 1814, and it is somewhat significant that he says nothing about its size or the character of the grounds around it. And especially is this so because in a letter written by him on Feb. 9, 1832, to some unknown correspondent he spoke of one of the ancestral homes of the Randolphs in Virginia as a "noble mansion"[2]; which it doubtless had been. It is quite possible, therefore, that the scale of the Cawsons home and the grounds about it has been somewhat magnified by tradition *more majorum Virginianorum.*

The lineage of John Randolph was such as well to inspire the personal and family pride which was such a deeply rooted characteristic of his. On the paternal side he was descended from the celebrated William Randolph, "Gentleman,"[3] of Warwickshire, a nephew by the half-blood of Thomas Randolph, the poet, whom rare Ben Jonson is said to have adopted, among the young poets whom he called his "sons." He emigrated to Virginia about 1673, when he was about twenty-four years old, and lived long enough before his death, some thirty-seven or eight years later, to become clerk and speaker of the House of Burgesses, Attorney-General, and one of the founders

[1] Garland, v. 1, 2.
[2] *The New Mirror*, v. 2, 101.
[3] Will of Wm. Randolph, Va. State Library.

and trustees of William and Mary College; to say nothing of his zealous efforts to promote the civilization of the Indians. He was also an extraordinarily successful planter and ship-owner, erected a splendid mansion at Turkey Island, and died leaving a large fortune, for his time, to his children. While the lofty dome of the mansion lasted, it was one of the conspicuous beacons by which the James River navigator directed his course, and its structure was so elaborate and splendid that we are even asked to believe that a man served out the entire term of his apprenticeship to the trade of a carpenter in one of its rooms. The children of William Randolph and Mary Isham, his wife, the daughter of Henry and Catherine Isham of Bermuda Hundred, were nine in number, seven sons and two daughters,[1] and in process of time the descendants of their children spread over Southside Virginia almost as thickly as young pines sown by the winds do over one of its broom sedge fields, and intermarried so freely with each other as to be humorously likened, along with other Virginia families, to a tangle of fishhooks, so closely interlocked that it is impossible to pick up one without drawing three or four after it. Whether originating in the feeling that nothing was good enough for a Randolph except a Randolph or not, imbreeding went on to such an extent among the descendants of William Randolph that the Rev. Philip Slaughter could say, for instance, in the second edition of his *History of Bristol Parish* in 1879, that the children of Dr. Robert C. Randolph, of Haymarket, Clarke County, Virginia, had in their veins the united blood streams of five of the seven sons of William Randolph.[2] When the Randolphs

[1] "The Randolph Family," by W. G. Stanard, *Wm. and Mary Quarterly*, v. 7, 122; *A History of Bristol Parish*, by Rev. Philip Slaughter, D.D., (2d Edition), 1879, 212 (note); *History of Colony, etc., of Va.*, by Chas. Campbell, 629; *Old Churches, etc., of Va.*, by Bishop Wm. Meade (Phila., 1910), v. 1, 138 (note); *Life of Thomas Jefferson*, by Henry S. Randall, v. 1, 8 and 9; *Famous Americans*, by James Parton, 183; MS. Diary of John Randolph.

[2] P. 220.

MARY ISHAM, WIFE OF WILLIAM RANDOLPH OF TURKEY ISLAND
From the original in the collection of Edward Carrington Mayo, Richmond, Va.

did marry outside of the circle of their own kindred, it was with such gentle families as the Lees, the Blands, the Flemings, the Bollings, the Beverleys, the Harrisons, the Carters, the Skipwiths, the Fitzhughs, the Grymeses, the Burwells, the Pages, the Carys, the Wormleys, the Nelsons, the Berkeleys, the Lightfoots, the Spotswoods and the Cockes.[1] By the close of the American Revolution, they formed so innumerable and powerful a clan that the Marquis de Chastellux was able to comment upon them as follows:

"One must be fatigued with hearing the name of Randolph in travelling in Virginia (for it is one of the most ancient families in the country); a Randolph being among the first settlers, and is likewise one of the most numerous and rich. It is divided into seven or eight branches, and I am not afraid of exaggerating when I say that they possess an income of upwards of a million of livres."[2]

But it must not be supposed that until the Civil War, when the Randolphs and all the other old Virginia families were reduced to a common footing of impoverishment, every branch of the Randolph family continued to be thrifty and affluent. That would be asking too much of the tides of human destiny. That the Randolph connection came to have its full share of the scapegraces and spendthrifts who are engendered in the womb of every family, we need not go further than the letters of John Randolph himself to certify. In one to his niece, Elizabeth T. Coalter, when dwelling upon the thriftlessness of certain of his Randolph, Bland, and Bolling contemporaries, he complains:

"It was not necessary or even desirable that the descendants of these families should be learned or shining men, but they might have been better than mere Will Wimbles. Ah! I wish

[1] *Old Churches*, etc., by Meade, v. 1, 138 (note); *Bristol Parish*, 212, *et seq.*

[2] *Travels in N. America* (London, 1787), v. 2, 151.

they were even no worse than humble Will. But some are what I will not stain my paper with."[1]

The children of William Randolph were: 1. William of Turkey Island, who married Elizabeth Beverley; 2. Thomas of Tuckahoe, who married Miss Fleming; 3. Isham of Dungeness, who married Jane Rodgers; 4. Richard of Curles, who married Jane Bolling; 5. Sir John Randolph, of Tazewell Hall, Williamsburg, who married Susan Beverley, a sister of his brother William's wife; 6. Henry, who never married; 7. Edward, who married a Miss Groves; 8. Mary, who married William Stith, and 9. Elizabeth, who married Richard Bland.[2]

"The first of the name who settled in Virginia," says Bishop William Meade, "became possessed of the large estate on James River called Turkey Island . . . to which he added numerous other estates, on which he settled his sons; building excellent houses for all of them."[3]

And by the names of these other estates whole groups of prolific Randolphs became collectively known. "They are so numerous," declares Thomas Anburey in his *Travels through the Interior Parts of America*, published in 1789, "that they are obliged like the clans of Scotland to be distinguished by their places of residence."[4] But it is not the high official and social position of William Randolph, nor his ripe masses of mottled tobacco leaves, nor his inbound and outbound ships, but the intellectual distinction attained by so many of the seed of his robust loins which renders him by far the most noteworthy *præpositus* in American history. In the illustrious Adams family of Massachusetts, which has given birth to two Presidents (and they a father and son), talent and public usefulness have run from generation to generation as surely as a

[1] Feb. 12, 1826, Bryan MSS.
[2] *Old Churches*, etc., by Meade, v. 1, 138 (note); J. R.'s Diary.
[3] *Ibid.* [4] V. 2, 352.

covenant in a skillful lawyer's deed. But eminent as the posterity of President John Adams, the father of President John Quincy Adams, have been, they are, when compared with the posterity of the original master of Turkey Island, "but as the marigold at the sun's eye"; to go back for a standard of comparison to the age of William Randolph's poetic half-uncle, Thomas Randolph. From William Randolph all these persons derive their descent; three famous as only truly great men are famous; others not so famous but certain of a lasting celebrity, and still others not celebrated yet entitled to honorable remembrance: Thomas Jefferson, John Marshall, and Robert E. Lee; Sir John Randolph, just named as one of the sons of William Randolph, King's Attorney General and Speaker of the House of Burgesses; Peyton Randolph, one of Sir John's sons, King's Attorney General and President of the first Congress; John Randolph, his brother, King's Attorney General; Edmund Randolph, son of John Randolph, Governor of Virginia, Attorney General and Secretary of State of the United States; Thomas Mann Randolph, Senior, member of the House of Burgesses and of the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1776; Thomas Mann Randolph, Junior, Governor of Virginia and member of the House of Representatives; Thomas Jefferson Randolph, son of Thomas Mann Randolph, Junior, author of *The Life and Correspondence of Thomas Jefferson* and member of the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1851–1852, and at one time Rector of the University of Virginia; George Wythe Randolph, son of Thomas Jefferson Randolph, Secretary of War of the Southern Confederacy; Sarah Nicholas Randolph, his sister, author of *The Domestic Life of Thomas Jefferson;* Thomas Jefferson Coolidge, Minister to France; Beverley Randolph, Governor of Virginia; John Randolph of Roanoke, member of the House of Representatives and of the United States Senate and Minister to Russia; Alfred M. Randolph, Bishop of

Southern Virginia; Innes Randolph, author of the vigorous poems, "John Marshall" and "I am a Good Old Rebel"; William Stith, the Historian of Virginia; Richard Bland, "the Virginia Antiquary," member of Congress in 1774 and author of *The Inquiry into the Rights of the American Colonies;* Colonel Theodorick Bland, Junior, the gallant Revolutionary officer, for three years a member of the Old Congress and afterwards a member of the first House of Representatives under the Federal Constitution, and also a member of the Virginia Convention of 1788 which adopted that instrument; Hugh Nelson, member of the House of Representatives, and Minister to France; General Henry (Light Horse Harry) Lee, the father of Robert E. Lee, the celebrated Revolutionary Commander, member of the Old Congress, the House of Representatives, and the Virginia Convention of 1788, Governor of Virginia, and author of *Memoirs of the Southern Campaigns;* Charles Lee, Attorney General of the United States; Henry Lee, author of *The Campaign of 1781 in the Carolinas* and other writings; General George Washington Custis Lee, son of Robert E. Lee, General in the Army of Northern Virginia and the successor of his father in the Presidency of Washington College (now Washington and Lee University); William Henry Fitzhugh Lee, son of Robert E. Lee, General in the Army of Northern Virginia, and member of the House of Representatives (*a*); Fitzhugh Lee, the nephew of Robert E. Lee, cavalry commander in the Army of Northern Virginia, and Governor of Virginia; Thomas Nelson Page, author of *In Ole Virginia*, and other productions, and Ambassador to Italy during the World War; James Pleasants, United States Senator and Governor of Virginia; Henry St. George Tucker, President of the Virginia Court of Appeals and professor of law at the University of Virginia; Nathaniel Beverley Tucker, professor of law at William and Mary College, and author of *George Balcombe*, pronounced by Edgar Allan Poe in his

Marginalia "the best American novel," and also of *The Partisan Leader;* John Randolph Tucker, Attorney General of Virginia and member of the House of Representatives; Henry St. George Tucker, his son, member of the House of Representatives; Beverley D. Tucker, Bishop of Southern Virginia; William J. Dawson, member of the House of Representatives, and Roger A. Pryor, member of the House of Representatives, General in the Confederate army and Justice of the Supreme Court of New York. Other notable descendants of William Randolph are William Munford, the translator of the *Iliad;* George Wythe Munford, his son, author of *The Two Parsons;* and for years the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Virginia; John Hampden Pleasants, the editor of *The Richmond Whig;* David Hunter Tucker, an eminent physician and author of a manual on obstetrics; St. George Tucker, author of *Hansford, A Tale of Bacon's Rebellion;* Sidney Smith Lee, brother of Robert E. Lee, Captain in the United States and Confederate Navies; Commodore Beverley Kennon, of the United States Navy, and Beverley Kennon, his son, Captain in the United States and Confederate navies and Colonel in the army of the Khedive of Egypt. Of the powerful Douglas family a proud distich declared:

> "So many, so good, as of the Douglases have been,
> Of one surname in Scotland never yet were seen."

With the restriction to one surname modified so as to include the same blood under other surnames, these lines might aptly be applied to America and the Randolphs.

Nor (*a*) was Sir John Randolph the only son of William Randolph who rose to public prominence in Colonial Virginia. William Randolph, the younger, was at one time or another, a County Justice, a County Clerk, clerk and member of the House of Burgesses, and a member of the Council; Isham, a member of the House of Burgesses,

Adjutant General of the Colony, and its agent for the transaction of its business with England; and Richard, a Colonel of Militia, County Justice, a member of the House of Burgesses, and the Treasurer of the Colony.[1] This Richard (Richard Randolph of Curles), was the paternal grandfather of John Randolph of Roanoke. He resided at Curles Neck, and his first wife was Jane Bolling, who was the daughter of John Bolling, of Cobbs, in Chesterfield County, "a great Indian trader,"[2] who was the son of Robert Bolling of Kippax, who was the husband of Jane Rolfe, who was the daughter of Thomas Rolfe, who was the son of John Rolfe and Pocahontas, who was the daughter of Powhatan, the Indian King, from whose fell vengeance Captain John Smith was saved by her intercession.[3] (*b*) Richard Randolph, of Curles, was the father of three daughters and four sons; Richard, Ryland, Brett, and John, the father of John Randolph of Roanoke.[4] He would seem to have made a considerable addition to his patrimony; for his son Ryland erected a pillar in his memory at Turkey Island which stated that its foundations had been laid in the calamitous year, 1771, when all the great rivers of that country had been swept by inundations never before experienced, which had changed the face of nature and left traces of their violence that would remain for ages; and that it had been raised to the memory of the first Richard and Jane Randolph of Curles, to whose parental affection, industry, and economy the son was indebted for tenderness in infancy, a good education in youth, and ample fortune at mature age. These words were copied by John Randolph of Roanoke in his manuscript diary which we have enjoyed the great privilege of examining, and, influenced either by his general disfavor

[1] "The Randolph Family," by Stanard, *Wm. and Mary Quarterly*, v. 7, 122.

[2] J. R.'s Diary.

[3] *Bristol Parish*, 140; J. R.'s Diary.

[4] *Bristol Parish*, 217; J. R.'s Diary.

POCAHONTAS

From a copy of the original at Berton Rectory, Norfolk, England, by W. L. Sheppard, Va. State Library.

for the Will Wimbles of the Randolph connection, or by the particular fact that his own estate had come to him, encumbered by a mortgage, which his father had given of his entire property, real and personal, except his favorite body servant, Syphax, as security for the payment of a debt which this brother had contracted to the Hanburys, the great Virginia merchants of London,[1] he placed an asterisk opposite to the words "ample fortune," and appended to it this vicious jab: "which he squandered to the last shilling."

Richard Randolph, of Curles, died in England on December 17, 1748, in the fifty-eighth year of his age[2]; leaving, it is said, forty thousand acres of land (*a*) in Virginia, including some of the choicest alluvium in the valleys of the James, the Appomattox, and the Staunton or Roanoke,[3] and a will[4] by which he strove to make a clear and equitable distribution of his estate between his wife and the other members of his family. The paper was executed on November 18, 1747, and, as the present County of Charlotte, in which John Randolph of Roanoke resided during the greater part of his adult life, was then a part of Lunenburg County, it is interesting to note that, among its provisions, was one empowering his executors to close certain contracts into which he had entered with various purchasers for the sale of portions of his located but unpatented lands, and of his unlocated lands in Lunenburg County at the rate of five pounds, current money, for every hundred acres of low grounds, and of three pounds, twelve shillings, and six pence for every hundred acres of high ground. It is also interesting to note, as giving us some insight into the extent of this great planter's operations, that he mentions in his will several "parcels of tobacco shiped which may not arrive," *i.e.*, in England, "and near one hundred hogsheads in the hands of Mr. Hanbury, of London, not accounted for, besides upwards

[1] J. R. to Quincy, Dec. 7, 1815, *Life of Quincy*, 363.
[2] J. R.'s Diary. [3] Garland, v. 1, 7. [4] Va. State Library.

of fifty hogsheads shiped him by the *Montague*." But the provisions of the will, with which we are most directly concerned, are those by which he gave to his son, Ryland, all his land "at the fork of Appomattox River, situate on both sides the said River in the counties of Goochland and Amelia," now in the counties of Cumberland and Prince Edward, and to his son, John, all his land "on both sides Stanton or Roanoak River in Lunenburg County" (now in Charlotte and Halifax Counties), and all his stocks of cattle, sheep, hogs, horses and mares which should be on said lands and plantations, when John arrived at lawful age, together with an equitable share of his slaves, including by name Indian John and Essex. The lands on both sides of the Appomattox devised to Ryland, or a part of them, afterwards became the property of his brother, John, and, during the ownership of the latter and his family successors at any rate, if not before, bore the name "Bizarre." And the lands on the south side of the Staunton River devised to John would seem to have been either absorbed by the settlement of his father's estate or to have been voluntarily alienated by John subsequently; for no mention is made of them in his will. But Roanoke, the estate from which John Randolph of Roanoke derived his suffix, was the land, or part of the land, on the north side of the Staunton River devised to his father by Richard Randolph, of Curles (*a*).

Of John, the father of John Randolph of Roanoke, we know little, aside from the dates of his birth, marriage, and death, except that, at the commencement of the American Revolution, he united with Theodorick Bland, Senior, his father-in-law, and Theodorick Bland, Junior, his brother-in-law, in the sale of forty negroes for the purpose of raising a fund with which to purchase powder to replace that abstracted by Lord Dunmore from the magazine at Williamsburg,[1] that he made a journey to Canada when Al-

[1] Garland, v. 1, 2.

bany was but a frontier post[1]; and that he left a will[2] which reveals an intense love for his wife, a bitter hatred of the elder Judge Paul Carrington, of Charlotte County, and an estimate of the supreme value of a good education which did him infinite honor. He was born on June 29, 1742, old style, and died at Matoax on October 28, 1775.[3] As he died before John Randolph of Roanoke was three years old, the latter cannot be said to have ever really known him. But the pulsations of family pride and affection beat strongly in the bosom of the son, and there was ever a more or less romantic glow about the feelings with which he regarded any object endeared to him by family attachment or friendship. One of his biographers tells us, on what authority we do not know, that he always wore a miniature of his father in his bosom.[4] But we do know that, in one of his letters to his young cousin, Theodore Dudley, he requested him to send him, among other things, his "father's picture,"[5] and, when he was dying, he had his shirt slit with a knife and a large gold stud inserted in it which had belonged to his father; so that he might die with this stud on his breast.[6] We also learn from a letter that he wrote to Nathan Loughborough a few months before his death, that the names of three of his geldings, Sharard, Snip, and Aranoka, had been borne by his father's curricle horses, "of which," the writer said, "he kept one relay."[7] His Diary also discloses the fact that among his cherished possessions were certain items of plate and other small articles which had been owned by his father.

It is to the will of the elder John Randolph, however, that we must look for his true character. It was evidently an intense and ardent one. No less than seven times in the will does he refer to his wife as his "loveing wife." After

[1] *Life of Quincy*, 363.
[2] Chesterfield Co., Va., will book 2, p. 328.
[3] J. R.'s Diary. [4] Garland, v. 1, 69.
[5] *Letters to a Y. R.*, 143. [6] Garland, v. 2, 373.
[7] Oct. 11, 1832, Nathan Loughborough MSS.

devising Bizarre to his eldest son Richard, he devises to his second son, Theodorick, all the tract of land lying on the Staunton River below the mouth of the Little Roanoke in Charlotte County subject to the condition that he should not part with it in any manner to one Paul Carrington, then living on or near Little Roanoke, who had cheated his brother Ryland out of £570 in a bargain for 310 acres of low grounds on the opposite side of Little Roanoke, or to any of his children. "My reason," the bitter testator adds, "for giveing this land on such a condition is that to this day I feel and my children may feel the vilany of that Paul Carrington." The testator then devises to his son, John, all his tract of land on Staunton River in Charlotte County, "joining to Paul Carrington land," subject to the same vengeful condition. These Parthian arrows shot from the grave at the reputation of Judge Carrington were *sine ictu*, for like unsmutched snow, if the last word can ever be said about any man, was the character of the owner of "Mulberry Hill," hard by Roanoke, who, after having been a member of the House of Burgesses, of the first and second Virginia State Committees of Safety, and of the different Virginia Revolutionary Conventions, a member of the Virginia House of Delegates, and a judge of the first General Court and of the Court of Appeals under the State Constitution of 1776, and, after having, throughout his life, been held in the very highest degree of public esteem for integrity and unselfishness, resigned his seat on the bench with these memorable words: "Having served my country for forty-two years without intermission—twenty-nine of those years devoted to the Judiciary Department—and being now in the seventy-fifth year of my age, I think it time for me to retire from public business to the exalted station of a private citizen."[1] The true quality of Judge Paul Carrington, Sr., may well be inferred from the fact that, though the eldest son of his father,

[1] *The Cabells and their Kin* by Alexander Brown, 206.

COAT OF ARMS OF THE RANDOLPHS

As used by John Randolph on his bookplates.

before the passage of the Act which abolished primogeniture in Virginia, he generously admitted each of his brothers and sisters to an equal share in his father's intestate estate.[1] "My father," said John Randolph of Roanoke in a letter to Francis Scott Key, "left for some reason of his own this old family adage (*nil admirari*) and adopted *fari quae sentias* [say what you think] for his motto."[2] It is safe to assume that the elder John Randolph was simply a slave to the spirit of his heady motto when he broke out into his fit of posthumous ire against one of the purest and best of men. Very different is the flash of self-revelation found in that part of his will which dealt with the education of his children: "My will and desire is . . . also," he said, "that my children be educated in the best manner without regard to expence as far as their fortunes may allow, *even to the last shilling* . . . and that neither of them be brought up without learning either trade or profession."

On the maternal side, too, the ancestry of John Randolph of Roanoke enjoyed an uncommon degree of social and political prestige; for his mother was a Bland, namely, Frances Bland, the daughter of Theodorick Bland, Senior, of Cawsons, who was the son of Richard Bland of Jordan's Point, in Prince George County, who was the son of Theodorick Bland of Westover, in Charles City County, the paragon of American colonial homes.[3] This last Theodorick Bland married Anne, the daughter of Richard Bennett, the colonial Governor of Virginia, and now lies buried at Westover between his two friends, William Perry and Walter Aston. "He was," declares Charles Campbell, "one of the King's Council for Virginia and was both in fortune and understanding inferior to no person of his time in the country."[4] The second wife of Richard Bland of

[1] *The Va. Convention of 1776*, by Hugh Blair Grigsby, 104.
[2] Garland, v. 2, 33. [3] *Bristol Parish*, 152, 155, 158, 159; J. R.'s Diary.
[4] *Hist. of the Colony, etc., of Va.*, by Campbell, 671.

Jordan's Point, the son of Theodorick Bland of Westover, was Elizabeth Randolph, the daughter of William Randolph, the original proprietor of Turkey Island.[1] The mother of John Randolph of Roanoke, therefore, as well as his father, was a descendant of the founder of the Randolph family in Virginia; and she and her husband were second cousins. Indeed, the several genealogies of the elder John Randolph and his wife were still more closely interlaced, because they were both descendants of Robert Bolling too. But, unlike her husband, she was not a descendant of Pocahontas, as her derivation from Robert Bolling was not referable to his marriage with his first wife, Jane Rolfe, but to his marriage with his second wife, Anne Stith.[2] When John Randolph was in England in 1822, he made a point of inspecting the monuments of the Bland family in the parish church at Kippax, the seat of the English Blands, and he records in his Diary, along with many other details relating to the English Blands, the fact that the armorial bearings on them were the same as those on the tombstone of his maternal grandfather's grandfather in Westover Churchyard.[3] *Sperate et vivite fortes*, a very different motto from the cynical *Nil admirari* of the Randolphs or the rash *Fari quae sentias* of the elder John Randolph was the family motto of the Blands, and it well accorded with the bold, sanguine spirit of more than one of the Virginia Blands.[4] Giles Bland, of Berkeley, known as "the Rebel" from his participation in Bacon's Rebellion, which brought him to the gallows, was the nephew of Theodorick Bland of Westover. "He was," says Charles Campbell, "a man of talents, education, courage, and haughty bearing."[5] Richard Bland, the son of Theodorick Bland of Westover, "The Virginia Anti-

[1] *Bristol Parish*, 155; J. R.'s Diary.
[2] *Bristol Parish*, 141; J. R.'s Diary.
[3] J. R.'s Diary. [4] *Id.*
[5] *Hist. of the Colony, etc., of Va.*, by Campbell, 305.

quary," and Revolutionary patriot, was pronounced by Thomas Jefferson, in a letter to William Wirt, "the most learned and logical man of those who took prominent lead in public affairs," and, though a most ungraceful speaker, profound in Constitutional lore.[1] Indeed, Jefferson thought that there was more sound matter in his *Inquiry* than in the celebrated *Farmer's Letters* of Jonathan Dickinson. In a letter to Andrew Jackson, John Randolph of Roanoke expressed the opinion that Theodorick Bland of Cawsons, the brother of this Richard Bland, "was a very superior man" to him.[2] But it is the poet or the moralist, and not the biographer, who has to do with

> "Those who failed on earth great men to be,
> Though better than the men who won the crown."

Of all the male members of the Bland Family of Virginia, however, the most interesting is Colonel, or Doctor, Theodorick Bland, the brother-in-law of the elder John Randolph, of whom we have already said a word. In the letter to Andrew Jackson just mentioned, John Randolph of Roanoke says that his command of the guard which kept watch over the British prisoners at Charlottesville nearly ruined him, "for he was proud and magnificent," and in his Travels Thomas Anburey, who was a British officer and one of these prisoners, gives us two decidedly fresh and vivid little sketches of this side of the Colonel's character. The following is the first:

"Col. Bland, who commands the American troops, was formerly a physician at a place called Petersburg on the James River (*sic*), but, on the commencement of the war, as being some way related to Bland who wrote a military treatise, he felt a martial spirit arise in him; therefore quitted the Aesculapean art, and, at his own expense, raised a regiment of light

[1] *Jefferson's Works*, Memorial Edition, v. 14, 338.
[2] Mar. 18, 1832, *Jackson Papers*, Libr. Cong., v. 80.

horse. As to those troops of his regiment with Washington's army, I can not say anything but the two that the Colonel has with him here for the purposes of expresses and attendance are the most curious figures you ever saw; some, like Prince Prettyman, with one boot; others less fortunate without any; some hoseless with their feet peeping out of their shoes; others with breeches that put decency to the blush; some in short jackets, some in long coats, but all have fine dragoon caps and long swords slung round them; some with holsters, some without, but gad-a-mercy pistols; for they have not a brace and a half among them; but they are tolerably well mounted, and that is the only thing you can advance in their favor. The Colonel is so fond of his dragoons that he reviews and manœuvres them every morning, and, whenever he rides out, has two with drawn swords before and two behind. It is really laughable to see him thus attended with his ragged regiment which looks, to borrow Shakespeare's idea, as if the gibbets had been robbed to make it up. Then the Colonel himself, notwithstanding his martial spirit, has all the grave deportment, as if he was going to a consultation."[1]

All the same, the Colonel and his tatterdemalions were on the agreeable side of the prison dead-line, which was something that Anburey could not say of himself. The other sketch thrown off by Anburey is this:

"Having some business with Col. Bland, of whom I made mention in a former letter, I went to his house just as he had mounted horse, but he with the politeness, which but in justice to him I must say he shows to the British officers, dismounted and invited me in, and, after communicating my business, upon my taking leave of him, notwithstanding his politeness and attention, I could not help smiling at the pomposity and the great importance he assumes to make himself appear to us consequential; for, to convince us that he was conversant with the French language, having mounted his horse without his sword, he called to a negro he had purchased from one of the French West Indian Islands to bring it him; which the fellow

[1] V. 2, 320.

COAT OF ARMS OF THE SLANDS

did without the scabbard; when the Colonel, in great anger, said to him: *donney moi, donney moi*, and, after great hesitation, *donney moi mon scabbard.*"[1]

This is a good story well told, but it loses a little of its point when we turn to another book of American travels, that of the Marquis de Chastellux, who informs us that in 1781 he called on Col. Bland in Philadelphia, and then adds without the slightest criticism of his French: "He is a tall, handsome man who has been in the West Indies, where he acquired French."[2] Light Horse Harry Lee, too, imputes the failure of Washington to cross the Brandywine and to strike at Knyphausen to misleading intelligence brought him by Col. Bland, who, he says, was "never intended for the Department of Military Intelligence."[3] And for some reason or other, which is not very clear, Madison thought the Colonel eccentric.[4] But, even after full allowance is made for all contemporary detraction, whether by one of his prisoners or otherwise, he is a highly striking and attractive figure in the movements of his time. Even Anburey, in addition to his general tribute to his politeness to the British officers in his custody, admits that, in franking his letters for him, Col. Bland "behaved with true politeness and liberality of sentiment,"[5] (*a*) and, in the same breath, in which he questions his fitness for the Department of Military Intelligence, the Commander of Lee's Legion testifies that Colonel Bland was "noble, sensible, honorable and amiable."[6] In connection with his visit to him in Philadelphia, the Marquis de Chastellux says: "He is said to be a good soldier but at present serves his country and serves it well in Congress."[7]

The Bland Papers, a valuable fascicle of printed letters which Charles Campbell made up from originals that he

[1] V. 2, 397. [2] *Chastellux*, v. 1, 222. [3] *Bland Papers*, xxvii.
[4] *Life and Times of Jas. Madison*, by Wm. Cabell Rives, v. 1, 3.
[5] V. 2, 434. [6] *Bland Papers*, xxvii. [7] *Chastellux*, v. 1, 222.

had plucked from ruin and oblivion at Cawsons, will always preserve the memory of Colonel Bland, even were nothing else to do so. By this book we are informed that he was sent out at an early age by his parents to England to be educated, was for a time at school in that country, and afterwards studied medicine at Edinburgh.[1] With his medical fellow-students there from Virginia, he united in a petition to the Council and the House of Burgesses of Virginia, asking them to require all persons in Virginia, who might desire to practice medicine, to secure a license before doing so.[2] We get a glimpse of the institutions and manners of Colonial Virginia in a letter from Edinburgh in which he asked his father to send over a negro boy to him to serve as his valet; a request which was complied with.[3] Slavery was indefensible, except in the light of what someone has happily termed "historical charity," and, if there was no other way of getting rid of what Lord John Russell called "that fatal gift of the poisoned garment," it is better that it should even have been torn from the back of the South as it was, carrying blood and deep-seated tissue along with it as it went, than that it should have continued to work the torment and madness that it did; but there is no denying the fact that it interposed only too soft a protective pad between human ease and convenience and the pettier pricks of existence.

The unbroken transmission from age to age of human affection is also touchingly illustrated in a letter from young Bland's father to him, in which the former warns him not to return home without first letting his parents know that he was coming lest the shock of his unexpected arrival might be more than his dear mother could stand.[4] The apprehension was reasonable enough, for the boy had been beyond sea nearly ten years.[5] But when young Bland did come home it was with a soul soon to be unreservedly

[1] *Bland Papers*, xv, xvii. [2] *Id.*, xix (note). [3] *Id.*, xvii.
[4] *Id.*, Feb. 14, 1763, 21. [5] *Ibid.*

committed to the cause of the country that he was at all times prepared to defend with a "fluent and correct" pen, which, "if sometimes too florid or diffuse," was at other times "wanting neither in energy of thought nor in elegance of diction,"[1] or with a sword which was none the less keen because he had to hesitate for want of the French word for scabbard. After reading pretty much all that has been written by, to, or about him, including his loving letters to his "Dear Patsy," née Martha Daingerfield, who survived him long enough to undergo two more hymeneal changes of name, we can readily believe the writer who in terms similar to Lee's tells us that in character "he was virtuous and enlightened, of exemplary purity of manners and integrity of conduct, estimable for his private worth and respectable for his public services." The same person tells us that "he was tall (in his latter days corpulent), and of a noble countenance"; and that "his manners were marked by ease, dignity, and wellbred repose."[2]

It only remains for us to add that Colonel Bland sometimes wrote verses, and that once at least he turned a neat little literary conceit; dignified, however, by a sincere and sturdy patriotism. Writing to a mercantile house at Bristol, England, on the eve of the American Revolution, he said: "You will therefore excuse my not complying with your request to assist Captain Aselby in his loading. I should have vested the small proceeds in goods, but the present political disputes between these colonies and the mother country, which threaten us with a deprivation of our liberties and everything that is dear to us, forbid such a step, and induce us to exert every nerve to imitate the silk worm and spin from our own bowels, although the web should be our winding sheet."[3] We have been the more particular to sketch Colonel Bland at full length because by his will the elder John Randolph appointed him, to-

[1] *Bland Papers*, xxxi.
[2] *Ibid.* [3] *Id.*, xxi.

gether with Dr. Thomas Bland, Colonel John Banister and Mrs. Randolph, his wife, the guardian of his children; adding that it was his desire that Dr. Thomas Bland, and, in case of his death, Colonel Banister should have the whole care of his children's education. "I would not," he said, "trouble Colo. Bland with them, relying on their taking his advice in everything." It is plain that what the testator withheld from Colonel Bland did him as much honor as what he conferred.

Two other sisters of Colonel Bland besides Frances, the mother of John Randolph of Roanoke, whom he called his "tawny" sister, require mention.[1] One, Elizabeth, married Colonel John Banister, of Battersea, the son of John Banister, the eminent botanist, who came over from England to Virginia towards the close of the seventeenth century, and, while engaged in his favorite pursuit, was killed by falling from a rock near the Falls of the Roanoke River.[2] A plant, known as the Banisteria, perpetuates his name,[3] and it is pleasant to think that in an age of mythological changes this lover of nature might well have been transformed by some benignant divinity into such a river as the Banister of Halifax County, with which his botanical excursions probably made him entirely familiar. Colonel Banister was a member of the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1776, a cavalry officer of the Revolution, and a member of the Old Congress from 1778 to 1779. As a man he is said to have been "amiable and upright in private life" and "patriotic and enlightened" in his public life, and as a writer "always clear, correct, and easy," and "sometimes vigorous and eloquent."[4]

The second of the two sisters of Colonel Bland, to whom we are referring, Anna, married General Thomas Eaton of Roanoke River, North Carolina, and had a daughter, Anna, who married Guilford Dudley of North Carolina,[5]

[1] Garland, v. 1, 4. [2] *Bland Papers*, xxvii (note).
[3] *Ibid.* [4] *Ibid.* [5] *Bristol Parish*, 158.

afterwards of Tennessee, whose son, Dr. Theodore Dudley, established an imperishable claim upon the gratitude of all, who love good English, by publishing, under the title of *Letters to a Young Relative*, the letters written to him by John Randolph of Roanoke.

Theodorick Bland, Senior, of Cawsons never acquired the same degree of public reputation as his brother Richard Bland of Jordan's Point, or his son, Colonel Theodorick Bland; but he did win a sufficiently assured position in the public confidence to be, at one time or another, Lieutenant of his county, the Clerk of his county, and a member of the House of Burgesses.[1]

Of the childhood of his daughter, Frances, the mother of John Randolph of Roanoke, we know nothing, but of her life, after she became the wife of the elder John Randolph, we know not a little; and what we know warrants us in saying that she was both in mind and person one of the most remarkable women of her time. She was born on Sept. 24, 1752, was married to the elder John Randolph on Mar. 9, 1769, and died at Matoax on Jan. 18, 1788, after having become the wife of her second husband, St. George Tucker, a native of Bermuda, on Sept. 23, 1778.[2] She was therefore married to her first husband when she was sixteen years of age, and lived but thirty-five years. There is every reason to believe that her second marriage was an entirely happy one, and so must have been the first, violent as the elder John Randolph would seem to have been, to have justified him in describing her seven times in his will as "his loveing wife," and to have caused her to refer to her widowhood in her prayer-book as her "unhappy widowhood."[3] John Randolph of Roanoke was but fourteen years old when she died, but he never ceased to cherish a passionate devotion to her memory, which over and over again found tender or fervid expression in his conversation and letters.

[1] Garland, v. 1, 2. [2] *Id.* 5, *Bristol Parish*, 158. [3] Garland, v. 1, 4.

"I shared my mother's widowed bed," he said in a letter to his nephew, Tudor Randolph, written from Richmond on December 13, 1813, "and was the nestling of her bosom. Every night after I was undressed, and in the morning before I rose, I kneeled down in the bed, putting up my little hands, and repeated after my mother the Lord's Prayer and 'the Belief'; and to this circumstance I attribute some of my present opinions. I say present because they lay long dormant and as if extinguished within me."[1]

On a later occasion, he wrote to a friend as follows:

"I have been a skeptic, a professed scoffer, glorying in my infidelity and vain of the ingenuity with which I could defend it. Prayer never crossed my mind but in scorn. I am now conscious that the lessons above mentioned, taught me by my dear and revered mother, are of more value to me than all that I have learned from my preceptors and compeers. On Sunday I said my catechism, a great part of which, at the distance of 35 years, I can yet repeat."[2]

Among his recollections of his mother were the lectures that she read to her children from Hogarth's *History of Frank Goodchild* and *Tom Idle*, doubtless the standard prig and reprobate held up to the imitation and scorn respectively of Southside Virginia boys in her day; and to her precepts and the *Progress of Cruelty* he believed that he owed the horror which he had always felt at cruelty to dumb creatures.[3] We are startled for a moment when he writes to his niece, Elizabeth T. Coalter:

"I read Humphrey Clinker to your grandmama when your Uncle Henry was at the breast. It was the first and best edition. I could only relish then Win Jenkins' and Tabby's letters and that chiefly for the bad spelling. This is greatly corrupted by being amended in the later copies. It is Smollett's masterpiece."[4] (*a*).

[1] J. C. Grinnan MSS.; *Annual Register*, 1832–33, 440. [2] Garland, v. 1, 12.
[3] Letter to Eliz. T. Coalter, Dec. 22, 1830, Bryan MSS.
[4] —— 1825, Dr. Randolph B. Carmichael MSS.

Imagine an intellectual commerce between a mother and a youthful son in the year 1921 based upon Humphrey Clinker! In a letter to John Randolph Bryan, written from London on December 28, 1830, he states with the emphasis of grateful pride that his mother had the virtue of economy in perfection,[1] and the same sentiment impelled him to say in the letter to his nephew, Tudor, just mentioned: "My mother had been a faithful executrix of my father's will; a faithful steward of the effects committed to her charge in trust for her children. She left clear accounts and money (not a small sum) in hand." Young as he was when she died, she had, we may well imagine, already observed in his moral and mental organization the promise of future eloquence, because he said long afterwards when he had become one of the most renowned of American orators: "My mother once expressed a wish to me that I might one day or other be as great a speaker as Jerman Baker or Edmund Randolph! That gave the bent to my disposition."[2] Late in life, when his soul was enveloped in the folds of one of those hours of deep dejection, during which he was to his childhood what Cowper, when his heart breathed its black despair into *The Castaway*, was to Cowper, when his eyes were fondly fixed upon the picture of the mother's face which he had not known except in infancy, he wrote these words to a friend: "I am a fatalist; I am all but friendless; only one human being ever knew me. *She* only knew me."[3] (*a*) But it is in a letter, dated March 13, 1824,[4] to his friend Francis W. Gilmer, whose own rare literary gifts always elicited a due return from Randolph, that his love of his mother kindled with an exalted enthusiasm. Speaking of his niece, Elizabeth T. Coalter, whom he warmly admired and deeply loved, he said:

"I thank you sincerely for the promptitude with which you have relieved my mind from a state of cruel anxiety about as

[1] Bryan MSS. [2] Garland, v. 1, 23.
[3] *Ibid.*, v. 1, 25. [4] Bryan MSS.

beloved and lovely an object as the eye of man ever dwelt upon; 'worthy' as you say 'to have descended from Maria Theresa'; worthy of her own grandmother, whose character, I found, was drawn among the private papers of a deceased friend and neighbor—himself a man of taste and feeling and genius. 'On Friday, the 18th of January, 1788, about one o'clock P. M., departed this life the amiable and accomplished Mrs. Frances Tucker, who supported a painful and lingering illness with the utmost patience, fortitude and resignation. She has left to bewail her loss a most disconsolate family of six sons and two daughters. She was a most affectionate wife, an excellent mother, a good mistress, a friendly neighbor; most exemplary and notable in her family, delightful in conversation, elegant in manners and beautiful in person; for whom I had a sincere and lasting affection. N. Buchanan.'

Helen's cheek but not her heart
Cleopatra's majesty,
Atalanta's better part,
Sad Lucretia's modesty.

I never met with any human being, no not even Genl. Washington in the plentitude of his glory that inspired such strong emotions of reverence and admiration in the beholder as that lady worthy to have been the mother of the Gracchi. You will excuse this language in one who owes all that is valuable in his mind and character to her who forms the subject of his daily thoughts and nightly dreams; in one who, if she had been spared to her unhappy children, would have been less unworthy of such a mother."

And the striking tribute from the hand of the Buchanan mentioned in this letter (*a*) is abundantly corroborated by other contemporary testimony. In his *Seven Decades of the Union*, Henry A. Wise tells us that Benjamin Watkins Leigh, a man only less brilliant than John Randolph of Roanoke himself, once said to him that it was the joy of his boyhood to sit at the knee of Needler Robinson, his Scotch teacher, and to listen to his conversations with his

THE MARRIAGE OF POCAHONTAS AND JOHN ROLFE

father and the mother of John Randolph, who then lived at Matoax; that "the world thought her son spake as never man spake," but that she could charm a bird out of the tree by the music of her tongue."[1]

Nor should we pass over the judgment of Mrs. Randolph expressed by her niece, Mrs. Guilford Dudley. "She was," Mrs. Dudley said, "a woman not only of superior personal attractions but excelled all others of her day in strength of intellect, for which she was so justly celebrated."[2] A portrait of this lovely and gifted woman, for the testimony which we have just brought forward shows indubitably that such she was, is owned by one of her descendants the Rev. R. B. Grinnan, of Norfolk, Virginia.

By her first marriage Mrs. Randolph left three children, —all sons,—whose names we give in the order of their birth: Richard Randolph, Theodorick Bland Randolph and John Randolph of Roanoke; by her second marriage, in addition to two children who died under age, she left two sons, Henry St. George Tucker and Nathaniel Beverley Tucker, to whom we have already alluded in connection with the original William Randolph of Turkey Island, and a daughter, Anne Frances Bland (or Fanny) Tucker. The last named became the wife of Judge John Coalter, of the Virginia Court of Appeals, and was the mother of Elizabeth T. Coalter, who married John Randolph Bryan, of Eagle Point, Gloucester County, Virginia, the godson and namesake of John Randolph of Roanoke,[3] and thus became the ancestress of the Bryans, of Richmond and Petersburg, and the Grinnans, of Richmond and Norfolk.

Mrs. Randolph is buried at Matoax, as was her first husband. The inscription on his tombstone describes him as "*armiger*," and adds, after stating the date of his death and age: "*Non ossibus urna nec mens virtutibus absit.*" (Liberally: Let not a tomb be wanting to his body, or memory to his virtues.) The inscription on her tombstone

[1] P. 31. [2] Garland, v. 1, 11. [3] *Bristol Parish*, 159.

ejaculates in the mournful words of Horace, somewhat condensed: "*Francescae Tucker Blandae, conjugio St. Georgii Tucker, quis desiderio sit modus.*" (Liberally translated: When shall we cease to mourn for Frances Bland Tucker, wife of St. George Tucker?)

The first husband reclaims the companionship but the second retains the inscription. The elegiac gravity of these two inscriptions is relieved by a sprightly one on a neighboring tombstone which, in the true spirit of Virginia gallantry, declares of the spinster under it: "*Quam sprevit Hymen, Pollux Phoebusque coluere.*" (Whom Hymen despised Pollux and Apollo courted.[1])

Many years after his mother had been interred at this spot, John Randolph of Roanoke, in sending his condolences to his brother, Judge Henry St. George Tucker, upon the death of his eldest son, breaks out into these impassioned words:

"Meanwhile assure yourself of what is of small value compared with that of them that are a piece of yourself—of the unchanged regard and sympathy of your mother's son. Ah! My God! I remember to have seen her die; to have followed her to the grave; to have wondered that the sun continued to rise and set and the order of nature to go on."[2]

What man or woman is there who has not at sometime or other, in the not less feeling though less eloquent measure of his own cruel and bewildering grief, looked out half blindly upon a chaos like that hinted in these words?

Such was the remarkable ancestry that took John Randolph of Roanoke back to the wigwam of King Powhatan and the bridal wreath of Pocahontas, to the Elizabethan Randolphs, to the monuments and armorial bearings, with which death mocks human pride in Kippax Church, in Yorkshire, and to Bolling Hall, also in Yorkshire.[3]

[1] *Historical Collections of Va.*, by Henry Howe, 229; Garland, v. 1, 6.
[2] *Southern Collegian of Washington and Lee University*, Mar. 23, 1872.
[3] J. R.'s Diary.

CHAPTER II

Childhood

By his will, the elder John Randolph devised and bequeathed to Mrs. Randolph, for life, his Matoax estate, which consisted of 1305 acres on the Appomattox River, in Chesterfield County, Virginia, twenty working hands, to be selected by her, four plow-boys, and all his house servants, male and female. The testator also provided that his executors should furnish her with horses, cattle, hogs, sheep, oxen, plows, wagons, carts, and utensils of husbandry, of every kind, and with provisions, of every sort, raised on his estate, that she might fail to raise. Moreover, he bequeathed to her all his household furniture, linen, glass, plate, china, carriages, harness, carriage-horses, mares and riding horses; and his watch.[1] Nothing more was needed to beatify existence for a Virginian of that day.

No incident in the life of John Randolph before the death of his father has been recorded for us. Quite naturally, his earliest recollections were those engraved upon his memory by wounded pride, and, worst of all, by pride wounded by physical invasions of his morbidly acute sense of personal inviolability. In a letter to his niece, Elizabeth T. Coalter, he said: "I remember getting severely thrashed by my poor brother Theodorick in attempting to rescue from his torments a black kitten, to which he was acting the part of Jack Ketch. This was during our mother's

[1] Chesterfield Co., Va., *Will Book 2*, p. 328.

widowhood."[1] The remembrance of another chastisement inflicted upon him in his childhood is disclosed by the remarkable letter from him to his nephew, Tudor Randolph, dated Dec. 13, 1813, which has already been several times mentioned by us, and which is simply invaluable because of its chronological and other autobiographical details relating to his early life. "In the autumn of the year 1775," he said, "my mother married St. George Tucker. From that day, there was a change in my situation. The first blow I ever received was from the hand of this man, and not a week after his union with my mother."[2] This letter was written when the writer had been permanently estranged from his stepfather, and no one thoroughly familiar with the amiable and kindly character of St. George Tucker, the almost idolatrous reverence and affection with which he was regarded by his stepson for many years, and the atrabilious feelings that brooding resentment always produced in Randolph, can doubt that the blow in this case must have been a very slight one indeed, and not a whit harder than its recipient deserved. That John Randolph, even as a very young child, may well have required such a moderate measure of discipline we can readily understand. Speaking of his sensitive and irritable nature, when a full-grown man, Benjamin Watkins Leigh once said of him: "He was like a man without a skin."[3] This was not precisely his plight as Randolph himself represented it to be, but not far from it. "There is no accounting for difference of skins in different animals, human or brute," he asserted in a letter on Jan. 31, 1826. "Mine I believe to be more tender than many infants, of a month old. Indeed I have remarked in myself from my earliest recollection a delicacy or effeminacy of complexion that but for a spice of the devil in my temper

[1] Dec. 22, 1830, Bryan MSS.
[2] J. C. Grinnan MSS.; *Annual Register*, 1832-33, 440.
[3] Nathan Loughborough MSS.

RICHARD RANDOLPH OF CURLES

John Randolph's Grandfather.
From portrait in Bolling Collection, Virginia Historical Society.

would have consigned me to the distaff or the needle."[1] A child with such a skin and temper must have been a trying little fellow at times. Indeed, we know, from a statement made by Randolph's cousin, Mrs. Guilford Dudley, that, before he was four years old, he once swooned away in a fit of passion and was restored to consciousness only with difficulty.[2]

As the boy grew older, he found himself in a very agreeable world. Matoax was only two miles from Petersburg, a town of considerable importance, in a social as well as commercial sense, and along or near the banks of the Appomattox River were scattered such well-known country places as Battersea, Mayfield, Burlington, Mansfield, Olive Hill, Violet Hill, and Roslin; homes truly typical, in some instances, at any rate, in their day of the simple, manly, cordial, and hospitable life which the Virginians of Randolph's time and of still later times led, and which Dr. George W. Bagby has portrayed with such surpassing pathos and beauty in his *Old Virginia Gentleman*.

It is said that, during her widowhood, Mrs. Randolph, to secure some relief from her loneliness, spent most of the year under the roof of her father at Cawsons, and that John was a great favorite with its entire household, and especially with his grandfather whom he subsequently extolled so highly in his letter to Andrew Jackson, and his cousin Anna Eaton, afterwards Mrs. Guilford Dudley[3]; and it is certain that, even after the second marriage of Mrs. Randolph, an intimate intercourse still continued to be maintained between the Matoax and Cawsons households. In a letter written by Theodorick E. Randolph, John's brother, to his stepfather from Princeton, he sends his love to his Uncle and Aunt Bland and the Banisters at Battersea.[4] And, in a letter from Columbia College to his stepfather the same correspondent sends his love to "all

[1] Garland, v. 1, 11. [2] *Ibid.* [3] *Ibid.*
[4] Sept. 13, 1787, *Va. Hist. Soc.*

our" friends at Battersea, Cawsons and Mr. Buchanan's.[1] A peculiar intimacy existed between John and one of the younger Banisters, and, in a letter to his niece, Elizabeth Tucker Coalter, dated Feb. 20, 1822, he furnishes us with some interesting evidence of his familiar footing, when a boy, with his Banister kin. "Do you know," he asks her, "a ballad that used to be sung to me, when I was a child, by a mulatto servant girl of my Cousin Patsy Banister, called Patience, about a rich suitor offering 'his lands so broad' and his golden store to a girl of spirit whose reply was somehow thus?

> What care I for your golden treasures?
> What care I for your house and land?
> What care I for your costly pleasures?
> So as I get but a handsome man.

Perhaps, old Aggy, who was my dear and honored mother's hand-maiden in 1769, when my father led her a spotless and blushing virgin to the altar, can remember it. I pry' thee get me that ballad. I can give you the tune."[2] What could be more, to use one of Randolph's own phrases, *à la Virginienne* than the figures which this delightful scrap of retrospection brings before us; the "sassy" yellow girl disdainfully tossing her head, and yet but partly smothering the amorous glow behind her half-closed lids as she sings, the aged retainer, of whom we shall hear more anon, handed down from mother to daughter, and from daughter to granddaughter, and cherished not only for the sake of her own dog-like fidelity and simple virtues, but for the sake of the sacred dead, whose tire-woman she first was, and the old slave-holder, for even at forty-eight John Randolph was an old man in everything but years, still carrying in his memory, the words, and in his heart, the melody, of the bye-gone plantation ditty, unheard by his material

[1] New York, June 22, ——, *Va. Hist. Soc.*
[2] Bryan MSS.

ear, except perhaps when hummed by himself, for upwards of forty winters.

Another utterance of John Randolph, this time an oral one reported by Jacob Harvey, a British fellow-voyager of his in 1822, takes us back to the annual trading ship which performed an office of such vital importance in the domestic economy of Colonial Virginia.

"When I was a boy, Sir," he is reported by Mr. Harvey as saying to a Yorkshireman, "the departure of a 'London trader' (as we used to call the ship) from Virginia was an affair of no small consequence to the community—equal to a Presidential election now-a-days. In my father's family, Sir, the whole household was called together. First, my mother (God bless her!) put down a list of the articles she wanted from London; next the children, according to their ages; then the overseer, and finally the domestic slaves; our mammy at the head of them down to the young ones who lived about the house. Not a single individual was omitted, Sir. Then, after the ship was gone, the weeks and days and finally the hours were counted until she returned, and the joyful signal of her arrival in James River was celebrated as a jubilee, Sir. In those days, how often have I called England 'my country' when the rumors of war and separation moved me not. But now, Sir, our Egyptian taskmasters only wish to leave us the recollections of past times, and they insist upon our purchasing their vile domestic stuffs. But it won't do, Sir; no 'wooden nutmegs' for Old Virginia. No Sir! We Virginians hold fast to the West Riding, Sir, and will still trust to your looms for our domestic supplies, Sir."[1]

The touch of caricature about this version of what Randolph actually said is manifest enough. But the report is sufficiently true to the character of Randolph and to his political convictions in 1822 to make us feel that what he really said has been recalled with substantial fidelity.

The education of John Randolph took him away from

[1] *The New Mirror*, v. 1, 346.

Matoax so often, and for such long periods, that only a part after all of his childhood and boyhood was spent there; but his association with it, in one way or another, was close enough to inspire him with a deep-seated attachment to the spot. The original drawings in the National Gallery at London, which make up the inimitable "Marriage *à la Mode*" of Hogarth, and "some glorious Claudes, the only real landscape painter," in the same gallery, brought back promptly to his memory the engravings from the drawings and those from Claude's "Morning" and "Evening" which hung in the dining-room and parlor respectively at Matoax. But his good taste was not too far suborned by the tender grace of a day that was dead to keep him from exclaiming in his letter to his niece, Elizabeth T. Coalter, about the engravings of the Hogarth drawings: "Oh, how unequal is the graver to give the full conception and execution of the pencil!"[1] In the year 1820, he paid a visit to Matoax, and the ruin wrought by fire and vandalism created such a distressing impression upon his mind that four years later he wrote to his niece as follows: "I went to Matoax for the last time four years ago. I cannot repeat the trial. If they had left the trees, the noble trees, and beautiful shrubs, I could have borne the destruction of the houses and gardens and orchard. These could have been replaced, but now . . ."[2] Matoax must have worn a truly desolate appearance for his graphic pen to have confessed its impotence by a blank. Some five years later, he reverts to Matoax in these words: "From my earliest childhood I have delighted in the groves and solitudes of poor old Matoax. I now recall several of my favourite seats where I used to ruminate, 'chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancies,' all bitter now."[3] Less than three years before his death, he wrote to his friend, Thomas A. Mor-

[1] Dec. 22, 1820, Bryan MSS.
[2] Mar. 6, 1824, Dr. R. B. Carmichael MSS.
[3] Nov. 1, 1828, Bryan MSS.

JANE SOLLING, WIFE OF RICHARD RANDOLPH OF CURLES

John Randolph's Grandmother.
From portrait in Bolling Collection, Virginia Historical Society.

ton, from London, stating that he had provided for a leaden coffin for himself, feeling, as he did, an inexpressible desire to lie by the side of his dear mother and honored father at old Matoax.[1] About three weeks later, influenced, perhaps, by the fact that the Commonwealth, to which he had been so unfalteringly loyal, had refused to renew his commission as a United States Senator, or to bestow upon him the same generous measure of recognition, in other respects, as his constant constituents in his Congressional District had done, as well as by the general despondency, which overspread his last years, he employs this language in writing from London to his namesake, John Randolph Bryan, who had then become the husband of his niece, Elizabeth T. Coalter:

"I shall probably never see how you and my darling niece succeed as housekeepers. Daily . . . I find that I am sinking. To be laid by the side of my honoured parents at old Matoax, is now the only wish that I have personal to myself. No tombstone, no monument for me. Let 'Spring with dewy fingers cold' dress the turf that shall cover my no longer feverish head or throbbing heart. If there be any memorial of me let it be a plain headstone with this inscription: 'John Randolph of Roanoke, son of John Randolph of Roanoke, the elder, and Frances Bland, his wife, and stepson of Virginia; born June 2, 1773; died . . . 1831.' Beyond this last period I feel it is impossible, short of a miracle, for my existence to be prolonged. 'Thy will be done.'"[2]

If Randolph had not been writing to two persons, with whom he was as intimate as he was with the rise and fall of his own chest, and had not been as careless always of his exquisitely worded letters as if they were but the perishable accents of his lips, we should say that there was a touch of affectation about this letter. But such was not the case. It was but the language of a man whose thoughts, under

[1] *Home Reminiscences of J. R. of Roanoke*, by Powhatan Bouldin, 227.
[2] Dec. 28, 1830, Bryan MSS.

the influence of strong feeling, clothed themselves with poetic forms as unconsciously as a scarlet tanager, hatched out in one of his trees at Roanoke, took on its coat of jet and flame.

In 1778, when Mrs. Randolph was married for the second time, the Revolutionary War was ablaze; and, in 1781, it found its way to her very door-sill. In January of that year, at the approach of the traitorous Arnold, the people of Southside Virginia felt as the Roman populace did when it saw the face of the false Sextus in the ranks of their invading foes:

> "But when the face of Sextus,
> Was seen among the foes,
> A yell, that rent the firmament,
> From all the town arose.
> On the house tops, was no woman
> But spat towards him and hissed,
> No child but screamed out curses,
> And shook its little fist."

But, mixed with the sensations of hatred and disgust inspired by the coming of Arnold, was also, of course, the panic which is always aroused in a civilian population by an hostile invasion. On Jan. 3, 1781, he landed at Westover with a considerable body of men, and began his destructive march to Richmond. As soon as the news of his landing had reached Matoax, St. George Tucker made hasty preparations to remove his family, and such of his personal effects as he could, to a place of safety; and so rapidly were these preparations consummated that, on the succeeding morning, he and his family, and several of Mrs. Randolph's slaves, were actually on their mid-winter journey. Few things that the mutations of human life bring around to us are more pitiable than the lot of a refugee in time of war; driven out as he is, from house and home, and exposed to all the rude hardships and discom-

forts of a purely primitive state of existence, in some respects barer than that of a prehistoric cave-dweller. But, fortunately for St. George Tucker and his family, they were not, as is the case with so many refugees under similar circumstances, mere aimless and despairing wanderers, for their destination was Bizarre, then the property of Richard Randolph, the son of the elder John Randolph, and an established and comfortable habitation.

Some knowledge of the circumstances, which attended the exodus of the fugitives from Matoax, has been bequeathed to us by John Randolph Tucker, one of the grandsons of St. George Tucker, who doubtless derived his account from trustworthy family tradition. Only five days before the flight commenced, Mrs. Tucker had given birth to her son, Henry St. George Tucker, the father of John Randolph Tucker. "The first time I ever saw that gentleman," John Randolph once said in a speech, "we were trying to get out of the way of the British." It certainly seems incompatible with our present domestic ideas that the sight of a new-born baby should have been so long withheld from his seven-year-old brother. When the family moved off from Matoax, St. George Tucker was the outrider and general escort; Mrs. Tucker and her infant, and doubtless her daughter, Fanny, too, who was but little over two years of age, were in a chariot driven by Daddy Syphax, who, like the portrait of little Oliver that Charles Surface insisted upon retaining at his auction of the family portraits, had been the only item of property which the elder John Randolph had been unwilling to bring under his blanket mortgage to the Hanburys; and John was mounted on a horse for the first time, and was committed, as were his brothers, Richard and Theodorick, to the care of Essex, another slave.[1] It is hard to realize that there ever was an occasion on which John Randolph

[1] Article on St. George and Henry St. George Tucker by John Randolph Tucker, *Va. Law Register*, v. 1, No. 11, Mar., 1896, 796; Garland, v. 1, 16.

was mounted for the first time; so passionately addicted was he afterwards to every pastime or excitement that horse-flesh can afford. We are apt to think of him as General Pleasonton, the Union cavalry officer during the Civil War, thought of the Confederate cavalry officer, Gen. J. E. B. Stuart, when he said, in the presence of a friend of the author, that the latter was the best cavalry officer that had ever been *foaled*. Years after the hegira from Matoax, John Randolph wrote to a sea-captain friend: "But to *me* a *horse* is what a *ship* is to *you*."[1]

Of the journey between Matoax and Bizarre we know nothing more except that the party was accorded an hospitable reception at one stage of its progress at Wintopoke (or Winterpock), the home of Benjamin Ward, Junior, the father of Maria Ward, who was subsequently to exert such a marked influence over the life of John Randolph.[2]

After reaching Bizarre, St. George Tucker retraced his steps for the purpose of rendering such aid as he could to Theodorick Bland, Senior, at Cawsons, and to provide, as far as possible, for the security of the property which he had left behind him at Matoax. Afterwards, as a militia major in the brigade of General Robert Lawson, he participated on March 15th in the battle of Guilford Court House, of which he wrote to Mrs. Tucker an interesting and valuable narrative. Later he returned to Bizarre, and, after spending a brief time with his family, took part as a lieutenant-colonel, under the command of Lafayette, in the siege of Yorktown where he was slightly wounded.[3] In a letter, written during the last years of his life from Warminster, Nelson County, Virginia, he recalled an incident belonging to this period, of which he was an eye

[1] Apr. 30, 1826, *The New Mirror*, v. 2, 71.

[2] Garland, v. 1, 17.

[3] *Ibid*, The Southern Campaign, 1781, from Guilford C. H. to the Siege of Yorktown by Chas. Coleman, Jr., *Mag. of Amer. Hist.*, v. 7, 36; St. George Tucker to Unknown person, Aug. 29, 1825, Bryan MSS.

witness, and which has the value that appertains to everything that brings a divinity like Washington down to the earth in the likeness of men. After stating how he had hastened to meet that great man and six or eight general officers, including Count Rochambeau, who accompanied him, when he was approaching the "old city" of Williamsburg, and how the General had recognized him, given him his hand and introduced him to the Count and his companions, he says:

"At this moment we saw the Marquis, riding in full speed from the town, and, as he approached General Washington, threw his bridle on his horse's neck, opened both his arms as wide as he could reach, and caught the General round his body, hugged him as close as it was possible, and absolutely ***kissed him from ear to ear*** once or twice as well as I can recollect with as much ardour as ever an absent lover kissed his mistress on his return. I was not more than six feet from this memorable scene."[1]

Of the manner in which Mrs. Tucker and her children passed their time at Bizarre, we know nothing. John doubtless followed up his first horseback ride with many others there, and if, as is stated by one of his biographers, he had already formed at Matoax a predilection for angling,[2] (*a*) it is fair to infer that under the oversight of Essex he may have tried his young hand on some of the "flat-backs" and "nigger-knockers" which doubtless peopled then, as they did long afterwards, during the life of Dr. George W. Bagby, as we know from his *Fishing in the Appomattox*, the waters of the Appomattox River on the Bizarre estate. The fact, however, has been brought to our attention that, while Mrs. Tucker and her children remained at Bizarre, they paid a visit of some duration to Roanoke. It is said that as late as 1810, when John Randolph became a permanent resident at Roanoke, there

[1] Aug. 29, 1825, Bryan MSS. [2] Garland, v. 1, 16.

were none but negroes on the Roanoke plantation,[1] and we take it for granted that this was true also during the visit of Mrs. Tucker. And we can likewise, we suppose, safely assume that the house occupied by her and her children and a Mrs. Hartston, who accompanied her, was the oldest of the two rude dwellings which afterwards constituted the home of John Randolph at Roanoke.

It was during this visit to Roanoke doubtless that the well-known incident mentioned by Hugh A. Garland, one of John Randolph's biographers, occurred. We quote his words:

"When riding over the vast Roanoke estates one day, she [Mrs. Tucker] took John up behind her, and, waving her hand over the broad acres spread before them, she said: 'Johnny, all this land belongs to you and your brother Theodorick; it is your father's inheritance. When you get to be a man you must not sell your land; it is the first step to ruin for a boy to part with his father's home. Be sure to keep it as long as you live. Keep your land and your land will keep you.'"[2]

We are so fortunate as to have obtained access to a manuscript letter from the hand of each of the three sons of the elder John Randolph written at Bizarre after Mrs. Tucker's return from Roanoke. The letters of Richard and Theodorick are dated July 9, 1781, and John's July 10, respectively. All three were written to St. George Tucker, and were probably composed at or about the same time because of some special opportunity for transmission. At the time that they were penned, Richard was eleven years old; Theodorick ten, and John eight; and there is certainly very little in them, from any point of view, to justify the notions of Henry Adams, in his *John Randolph*, that these three boys ran wild at Bizarre, and that discipline was never a part of Virginian education.[3] In point of tone, syntax and form, they will com-

[1] Bouldin, 21. [2] Garland, v. 1, 18. [3] P. 6.

pare quite favorably, we think, with most letters written by boys of the same ages at the present time in Virginia or elsewhere. Richard's letter is too long for transcription in its entirety. The other two letters we shall give in full.

"Brother Jack," Richard wrote, "has missed his ague. . . . Is it true that his Lordship has received a reinforcement of 1500? If it is I suppose the Marquis will not fight him. I wish I was big enough to turn out. If I was I would not stay at home long. Colo: Hdk says you are very much like Gen. Lawson in your temper and that you are to the full as passionate; if you are you are very much altered since you have been gone. I own to you I have been very negligent of my grammar, which I am very sorry to say, but be assured I shall have my syntax at my fingers' ends when you return."

Theodorick's letter was as follows:

"Dear Papa:

"I thank you for your good advice in your letter to Mamma, but I am such a perverse boy that I wish I had a tutor to make me mind my book as I cannot help wishing to play when it is time to read. I want to learn everything, but I cannot love confinement; and what is worse, the more I play the more I want to play; but I am sure when I go regularly to school I shall not be behind my brothers. Brother Hal is much cleverer than sister for his age though she is much improved in talking and walking. We are all wanting to see you; I was never so rejoiced as when we got your letter to leave Roanoke. I am my dear papa yr. dutyfull son

"Theok B. Randolph.
X

"Fanny sends you a kiss on this spot."

And this was John's letter:

"Dear Papa:

"I take this oppty of letting you know that we are all well and that I missed my ague at Roanoke. Mama and Mrs. Hartston hung up Abracadabra as a charm for that and to keep

away the enemy. Sister is worth a dozen of what she was when you left her. She says anything and runs about all day. I hope you are in favour with the Marquis. I don't doubt it, for I think you a very fine officer and will be able to make the militia fight, for if they do not now I don't think they ever will be collected after running away. Brother Dicky has turned me back from the optitive of *amo* to the potential mood of *audio* because Mr. Hearn never taught me. I thank you my dr papa for telling me in your letter to be a good boy and mind my book. I do love my book and mind it as much as I can myself, but we want a tutor very much. I hope in a month I shall be passing my Concords. I will try all I can to be a good boy and a favourite of Mama's and when you come home I hope I shall be one of yours.

I am dr papa yr dutyful and affect: son

JOHN RANDOLPH."[1]

The reader may judge for himself how far the writers of these sweet, ingenuous letters, so full of hyacinthine freshness and filial love and deference, were, as Henry Adams supposes all boys brought up on a Virginia plantation to have been at heart, "young savages."[2]

Speaking of the sojourn of the Randolphs and Tuckers at Bizarre, in connection with his slurs on the old Virginia life, Adams also says of the Randolph boys at Bizarre: "Schooling they had none."[3] Well, hardly! They had just fled with their parents to a distant asylum from the face of that which has never had much respect for school routine—war, and were living in a thinly settled neighborhood, liable to be over-run by Tarleton and his fierce troopers at any time, and from which almost every man capable of bearing arms, whether learned or simple, had been drawn off to battle with the invader. But all three of the letters show upon their face that even, under such unfriendly circumstances, discipline and a cheerful spirit of

[1] Geo. P. Coleman MSS.
[2] *J. R.*, 7. [3] *Id.*, 6.

obedience still remained features of this very Virginian household, and that the disposition was not wanting on the part of any one of the three boys, not even Theodorick, always a lethargic scholar, to second the earnest desire of St. George Tucker, so highly creditable to him, that the education of his stepsons should suffer as little as possible from the distractions of the time. Richard was evidently doing his best to perform the office of a Latinist for John, and, perhaps, for Theodorick too. And it is not to be forgotten that, if the Mrs. Hartston, of whom John speaks, did not discharge some of the duties of a teacher to the lads, aside from Latin, their mother, who had been their earliest teacher, was at hand to do it. John's letter is also valuable in demonstrating that it is not true that at Matoax the boys had never had any tutor except their clever mother or St. George Tucker, who was a man of fine scholastic acquirements, and gave, as there is written evidence to show, all the time that he could to the task of instructing the Randolphs.[1] The idea is distinctively negatived by John's reference to Mr. Hearn. After his marriage to Mrs. Randolph, St. George Tucker evidently bore duly in mind what the elder John Randolph had said in his will about the education of his children and his last shilling. As early after his marriage as July 20, 1779, he wrote to Colonel Bland from Matoax in these words:

"What you wrote about Bob [Robert Banister, a nephew of Colonel Bland] has inspired the boys with a spirit of emulation which I hope will be productive of some benefit to them. I find he serves as a very good spur to them when they are growing a little negligent. Two of them appear to be blessed with excellent capacities, but I confess I am afraid that the genius of your namesake [Theodorick], though possessed of great quickness and acuteness in many respects, does not lie in the literary line."[2]

[1] Garland, v. 1, 13. [2] *Ibid.*

It was the misfortune of poor Theodorick from the first to the last stage of his brief career to come in at times for a shake of the head like this and, towards the end, for still more pronounced gestures of disapproval. But, after having read everything that has been said to his prejudice and a considerable number of his letters, we are bound to say that, in our judgment, he was a youth who might just as readily, with a slight turn of circumstances, have gone right as wrong, and who, while he may at times have deserved a whipping at the hands of his teacher, was far from ever meriting a dunce-cap. There are unmistakable tokens of good feeling and affection in his letters, and they indicate an intelligent rather than a Bœotian head.

Even under the conditions that surrounded him at Bizarre, the interest of St. George Tucker in the education of his stepsons did not undergo any abatement. On May 23, 1781, he wrote to Colonel Bland: "Lose no opportunity of procuring a tutor for the boys, for the exigency is greater than you can imagine."[1] This letter was followed up by another on the same subject, written on July 17 in the same year from Richmond,[2] and, on September 21 of the same year, St. George Tucker was not so absorbed by the events which were leading up to the momentous capitulation of Cornwallis at Yorktown four weeks later as not to find time to write from Williamsburg as follows:

"The boys are still without, and more than ever in want of, a tutor. Walker Maury has written to me lately and given me such a plan of his school that, unless you procure a tutor before Christmas, I would at all events advise sending them to him immediately after. I know his worth; I know that his abilities are equal to the task; and I know that his assiduity will be equally directed to improve their morals and their understandings as their manners. With this prospect, I would not advise the providing any but a man of superior talents as a private tutor."[3]

[1] Garland, v. 1, 18. [2] *Ibid.* [3] *Ibid.*

One of the severest tests, to which a human being can be subjected, is that of winning from a stepson the full measure of filial devotion. And this St. George Tucker seems to have won from the young Randolphs by a general course of conduct, of which his solicitude about their proper education was but a single proof. "I remember to have heard a brother of mine," said Daniel Call, the Virginia Law Reporter, "who married a niece of Mrs. Randolph of Curles, and was thus occasionally thrown into circles, where he sometimes met the Matoax family, once say that 'Mr. Tucker must be the best father-in-law in the world, or his stepchildren would not be so fond of him.'"[1]

It is impossible, we hardly need affirm, to pass from the anxiety evinced by the elder John Randolph in his will about the education of his children, and the correspondence between St. George Tucker and Colonel Bland on the subject, without feeling that, while the quasi-aristocratic structure of the old Virginia society was such as to create indifference to universal education, it was uncommonly sensitive to the need for a thorough intellectual training on the part of those of its members upon whom its higher responsibilities were imposed.

And from what source did Henry Adams derive his notion that discipline was never a part of a Virginian education? It will not do, of course, to found a generalization on a single example. Even if it is admitted that such an intensely original, not to say unique, character as Randolph's lends color to the idea, we should not forget Washington, Jefferson, John Marshall, Robert E. Lee, and other Virginians, well known to fame, who were as remarkable for their sobriety and self-control as for their personal force. What Robert E. Lee, the son of the famous General, says of his father is as true of Virginia fathers as it is of fathers of the same race everywhere.

[1] Garland, v. 1, 12.

"Although he," the younger Lee says, "was so joyous and familiar with us, he was very firm on all proper occasions, never indulged us in anything that was not good for us, and exacted the most implicit obedience. I always knew that it was impossible to disobey my father."[1]

If the discipline which these words picture differs from that with which Henry Adams was familiar in the history of his own rigid though dutiful ancestors, it was only in the fact that it was too much interfused with the spirit of natural freedom and love to be exactly the same. The writer of these pages was born and bred about fifteen miles from Roanoke, and his recollection is that of a household in which his parents, affectionate as they were, did not hesitate to visit him, as a child and boy, with just punishment, physical or otherwise, whenever it was really needed; indeed, did not balk at delegating the corrective rod to his tutor under their own roof.

Virginia a region without discipline! It was the chosen seat of

> "Reading and riting and rithmetic,
> Taught to the tune of the hickory stick."

Speaking of the Old Field Schools of his youth in Bedford County, Virginia, which is but a short ride from Charlotte County, the Hon. John Goode, who was born in the year 1829, says in his *Recollections of a Lifetime:* "In those days, the teacher made free use of the rod and the strictest discipline was observed." And he tells a story at the same time which brings out the fact that even the girls in these schools did not always escape flagellation.[2] Dr. John Herbert Claiborne, born in the year 1828, in describing the town of Petersburg, which was only two miles from Matoax, as it was in the decade between 1850 and 1860, says:

[1] *Recollections, etc., of Gen. Robert E. Lee*, by Capt. Robert. E. Lee, 9.
[2] P. 21.

"Indeed, the rod was the right-hand assistant in every male school of that day and was recognized even down to the days of McCabe [the head of a celebrated boys' school at Petersburg of our own times], as a powerful help to the master and a most persuasive incitement to the pupil."[1]

In relation to one of these male schools, of which Charles Campbell, the talented historian of Virginia was the master, Dr. Claiborne remarks:

"Mr. Campbell was a most scholarly and companionable gentleman, but he was a representative of the old régime in which the rod reigned. He believed in the doctrine enunciated by Squire Jones in the *Hoosier School Master*, 'no lickin', no larnin'.' Only a few days ago I met with one of his old pupils who still cherishes lively recollections of a lively birch switch which adorned the master's desk."[2]

John E. Massey, the invincible stump-speaker, commonly known as "Parson" Massey, who was born in 1819 and reared in Spottsylvania County, Virginia, also bears similar testimony in that delightful book, *The Autobiography of John E. Massey*. "The 'rod' was an important adjunct to the teacher's work. It was usually installed in a conspicuous place as 'Prime Minister,' but it exercised the functions of all departments of government—legislative, judicial and executive, and was emphatically the 'Minister of War.'"[3] So, long after the date when John Randolph was at school, the magisterial rod in the schools of Virginia was still green and flourishing. But to satisfy himself that, if John Randolph was self-willed and ill-regulated, it was not because of any lack of punishment at school, Henry Adams need not have gone further than the school life of Randolph himself. Chastisement was such a con-

[1] *Seventy-five years in Old Va.*, 101.
[2] *Id.*, 100.
[3] P. 15.

spicuous feature of this school life that, in his letters, Randolph not only lets us know in English that he was castigated, but in Greek that Littleton Waller Tazewell, too, his school companion, was τυπτώδ.[1]

[1] Letter to Tazewell, Feb. 17, 1826, L. W. Tazewell, Jr., MSS.

CHAPTER III

Youth

When nine years old, John Randolph, together with his brothers, Richard and Theodorick, was sent to Walker Maury's school. Maury and St. George Tucker had been fellow-collegians at William and Mary,[1] and his school was situated at Burlington, about a mile east of the present village of Barboursville, in Orange County, Virginia. The house, in which Randolph had his room, is still standing, or was but a few years ago. It was a rude structure and sounds, in consequence, were so readily transmitted from one room in it to another that he is said to have attempted to shut them out from his apartment by daubing the cracks in its flimsy walls with clay.[2] At Maury's school, Randolph was miserably unhappy. This is made certain not only by his letter of Dec. 13, 1813, to Tudor, but by one of his agreeable letters to Francis W. Gilmer who was a product of the red lands of the neighboring county of Albemarle, Virginia.

"By this time," he wrote to Gilmer from Roanoke many years afterwards,[3] "you are in the midst of your red hills to which not without reason you think I have a dislike. You know the force of first impressions. Well, at the tender age of nine years, I was exiled from my mother's house and sent to school on Blue Run, in Orange County, in the immediate neighborhood of our

[1] Letter from J. R. to Tudor R., Dec. 13, 1813, J. C. Grinnan MSS., *Annual Register*, 1832–33, 440.

[2] *Hist. of Orange Co., Va.*, by W. W. Scott, 127, 203.

[3] July 2, 1825, Bryan MSS.

late President M——n [Madison]. There I was tyrannized over and tortured by the most peevish and ill-tempered of pedagogues, Walker Maury. This wretch excommunicated me body and soul. To this day I have a perfect recollection of the shock which the vulgar habiliments and boorish manners of my schoolmates and sordid, squalid appearance of the whole establishment, and economy of the place, inflicted upon me, and, when coachman Toney took leave to return home, my very heart died within me. This cruel punishment was unattended by the slightest good. A more vicious and profligate crew were never got together. Some four or five of us were gentlemen's sons and, as such, heartily envied and hated by our companions, who lost no opportunity to do us an ill turn. The red mud I to this day remember and the joy with which I greeted the broomstraw, old fields and sands of Chesterfield in the holidays. At that time of day, altho' at the close of the War, there had not been a complete revolution in manners as well as of government among us. You may judge what I was made to endure—the most thin-skinned, sensitive little creature in the universe."

The place is depicted in still darker tints in the letter to Tudor.

"We had," Randolph says, "scarcely the necessaries of life without an opportunity to acquire anything more than as much Latin as sufficed to furnish out a bold translation of the ordinary school books. Indignant at his treatment, your father [Richard Randolph], hardly thirteen years old, determined to desert and go home."[1]

The conditions of every sort about Burlington were unquestionably cruder than any to which Randolph had ever been previously accustomed in the lower country of Virginia; but they were nothing like so bad, we suspect, as he represented them to be, and his estimate of Maury should be read side by side with St. George Tucker's already re-

[1] J. R. to Tudor R., Dec. 13, 1813, J. C. Grinnan MSS., *Annual Register*, 1832-33, 440.

called by us. Indeed, this whole letter to Tudor, while perhaps the most important of all Randolph's letters to his biographer, was written in a mood like that which some ten years later led him to tell his niece, Elizabeth T. Coalter, that her letters constituted his almost only resource against the dark spirit that persecuted him.[1] Here and there, it is Randolph at his very worst, marked as it is in places by a cold, settled malignity of feeling towards certain individuals and an apparent desire to inoculate his nephew with the virus of his own personal prejudices and enmities. It would seem as if the retrospective character of the letter served to stir up the bile of every rancorous or morbid episode or incident in his past life, and a drop of gall is mixed with almost every drop of ink that his pen expended on it.

In the winter of 1783–4, if the memory of John Randolph is not at fault, he was transferred with Walker Maury and his school to Williamsburg, where Maury had been invited to establish a grammar school in connection with William and Mary College.[2] Only in this grammar school were Latin and Greek taught there.[3] Here began the boyish friendship between Randolph and Littleton Waller Tazewell which ripened into the devoted and lasting attachment that is one of the most winning features of the former's life.

"My acquaintance with John Randolph," Tazewell says in his manuscript reminiscences of him, which we have had the privilege of perusing, "commenced in the year 1784, when he was about 11 years old, I believe. In that year, he, together with his two older brothers, Richard and Theodorick, entered the grammar school, then recently established by Mr. Walker Maury in the City of Williamsburg, where I resided. Before

[1] Feby. 26, 1823, Bryan MSS.

[2] J. R. to Tudor, Dec. 13, 1813, J. C. Grinnan, MSS.; *Annual Register*, 1832–33, 440.

[3] *Discourse on the Life, etc., of L. W. Tazewell*, by Grigsby, 73.

his removal to Williamsburg, Mr. Maury had conducted a grammar school in the County of Orange and the three young Randolphs had been his pupils there. Their progress therefore was well known to their tutor when they re-entered his school in Williamsburg; in which school I had been a pupil from its commencement in that place. This school was established as an appendage of the College of William and Mary, in which there was no professorship of Humanity existing at that time. It was regulated most judiciously, and was soon attended by more pupils than any other grammar school that had been before established or has since existed in Virginia, I believe. I do not recollect the number of scholars exactly, but it exceeded one hundred, and included boys from every state then in the Union from Georgia to Maryland both inclusive. Such a number of pupils made it necessary that they should be divided into classes. The greater proportion of these classes were consigned by Mr. Maury, the principal, to the superintendency of his assistants, of whom there were four. When the young Randolphs entered the school, the number of pupils was not so great as it afterwards became. Richard, the oldest, was placed in the second class under the immediate direction of Mr. Maury himself. Theodorick and John were placed in the fourth class which was the head class consigned to the Superintendency of the chief usher, a Mr. Eliot. To this class I belonged, and, when the class was so augmented, it was engaged in reading, and had nearly finished, Eutropius. The book I then used I still possess, and the fact I have stated is derived from a class-roll written on its fly leaf. In a short time after the two young Randolphs joined it, our class had made such progress that it was transferred from the usher's department to that of the Principal. It then became the third class."

Then, after mentioning the fact that John Randolph was subsequently taken away from the school to Bermuda, Tazewell continues:

"At the time John Randolph left us, the class was engaged in reading Sallust and Virgil, and had made some progress in learning the Greek and French languages and the elements of

Geometry. You must indulge me if I mention here an incident that occurred at this time, which was recalled to my memory almost half a century afterwards by John Randolph in a manner peculiar to himself. When he was about to take his leave of us, he proposed to me that we should exchange our class books that each might have some testimonial of our mutual friendship and of its origin. We accordingly exchanged our Sallusts. Not many years since, while he was in Norfolk, preparing to depart on his mission to Russia, he shewed me the identical Sallust I had given him. On the fly leaf of the book, he had written at the time he received it how, when, and from whom he had acquired it. To this he had added this hexameter: '*Coelum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt.*'"[1]

If Randolph is to be believed, Walker Maury might well have applied this Latin truth to himself after his removal to Williamsburg. When his school was shifted from Orange County to that town, his rod was shifted along with it, and many a sour jest must have been wrung from his pupils by the inhuman use to which it was put in the inculcation of the Humanities. Hugh Blair Grigsby (*a*), a man whose historical labors are as precious to a Virginian as those of Jared Sparks in a wider field are to an American, informs us that he heard Tazewell say that Randolph was very idle at school and that he was flogged regularly every Monday morning and two or three times during the week.[2] This hardly harmonizes with Randolph's own statement in a letter to Elizabeth T. Coalter, dated Jan. 19, 1828, in which he says: "By the way I sent you a translation for which at school I should have been reproved, if not chastised, but, as I never incurred either disgrace (*about my book*), I will make amends now by a frank confession of my fault."[3] Grigsby's recollection did not fail him as to the whippings, though it is only prudent

[1] Mrs. Gilbert S. Meem MSS.; *Discourse on L. W. T.*, by Grigsby, 12.
[2] *Ibid.* [3] Bryan MSS.

to remember that the human memory sometimes has a way of multiplying a single impression, as time goes on, but it probably failed him as to what Tazewell said of their cause, if he really means to connect the idling with the whippings; for Randolph was a strictly truthful and accurate man. But one thing is certain. If Tazewell had made such assertions in Randolph's presence, Randolph assuredly would have fixed upon him the character of a fellow-sufferer. During his last years, in a letter to Tazewell, he made a reference to Maury County, Tennessee, and then, suddenly realizing the significance of the name, added: "Ominous name to us!"[1] And, in another letter to Tazewell, which belongs to the same period, he said, in regard to one of Tazewell's friends: "I believe he is *almost* as much attached to you as he would have been, had he known you man and boy for more than forty years, and been τυπτωὸδ with you by Walker Maury A. D. 1783–1786."[2] If, when Randolph left Williamsburg for Bermuda, he had been an idler, it must have been partly because he had been such an incessant reader of good books out of school; for it was during the previous years of his life that he laid the foundations of a knowledge of the English classics, so searching and thorough that their language became as much the habitual veneer of his conversation and speeches as Scriptural phrases were of Bunyan's writings. This is what he had to say on the subject himself in a letter to his young cousin, Theodore Dudley, dated Feb. 16, 1817.

"I almost envy you Orlando. I would if it were not Johnny Hooles' translation; although at the age of ten I devoured that more eagerly than gingerbread. Oh! if Milton had translated it, he might tell of

'All who, since baptized or infidel,
Jousted in Aspramont or Montalban,

[1] March 8, 1829, L. W. Tazewell, Jr., MSS. [2] Feb. 17, 1826, *Id.*

Damasco or Marocco, or Trebisond,
Or whom Bisserta sent from Afric shore,
When Charlemagne with all his peerage fell
By Fontarabia.'

Let me advise you to

'Call up him that left half told
The story of Cambuscan bold.'

I think you have never read Chaucer. Indeed, I have sometimes blamed myself for not cultivating your imagination when you were young. It is a dangerous quality, however, for the possessor. But, if from my life were to be taken the pleasure derived from that faculty, very little would remain. Shakespeare and Milton and Chaucer and Spenser and Plutarch and *The Arabian Night's Entertainments* and *Don Quixote* and *Gil Blas* and *Tom Jones* and *Gulliver* and *Robinsoe Crusoe* 'and the tale of Troy divine' have made up more than half of my worldly enjoyment. To these ought to be added Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Ariosto, Dryden, Beaumont and Fletcher, Southerne, Otway, Congreve, Pope's *Rape and Eloisa*, Addison, Young, Thomson, Gay, Goldsmith, Gray, Collins, Sheridan, Cowper, Byron, Æsop, La Fontaine, Voltaire (*Charles XII*, *Mahomed and Zaire*) Rousseau (*C. Julie*), Schiller, Madame de Staël, but above all Burke. One of the first books I ever read was Voltaire's *Charles XII*. About the same time, 1780–1, I read the *Spectator*, & used to steal away to the closet containing them. The letters from his correspondents were my favourites. I read Humphrey Clinker also; that is Win's and Tabby's letters with great delight; for I could spell at that age pretty correctly. *Reynard the Fox* came next I think; then *Tales of the Genii* and *Arabian Nights*. This last and Shakespeare were my idols. I had read them with *Don Quixote*, *Gil Blas*, *Quintus Curtius*, *Plutarch*, Pope's *Homer*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *Gulliver*, *Tom Jones*, *Orlando Furioso*, and Thomson's *Seasons* before I was eleven years of age; also Goldsmith's *Roman History*, 2 vols. 8vo., and an old history of Braddock's War. When not eight years old, I used to sing an old ballad of his defeat:

'On the 6th day of July, in the year fifty-five,
At two in the evening, did our forces arrive;
When the French and the Indians in ambush did lay,
And there was great slaughter of our forces that day.'

At about eleven, 1784–5, Percy's *Reliques* and Chaucer became great favourites, and Chatterton and Rowley. I then read Young and Gay, etc.; Goldsmith I never saw until 1787."[1]

In commenting on the youthful reading of Randolph, Henry Adams observes:

"But it is quite safe to say that, among these old fascinating volumes, then found in every Virginian country place, as in every English one, Randolph never met with one or two books which might have been seen in any New England farmhouse, where the freer literature would have been thought sinful and heathenish. He never saw, and never would have read, the *Pilgrim's Progress* or the *Saint's Rest;* he would have recoiled from every form of Puritanism and detested every affectation of sanctity."[2]

Again, we have a striking illustration of the very limited familiarity, to say the least, of this writer with the society against which he so often inveighs in terms of reckless detraction. Either he did not know, or forgot, that South-side Virginia, under the influence of Samuel Davies, of Delaware, who seemed, as one said of him on seeing him pass through a court-yard, "an embassador of some mighty king,"[3] and who was as great as he looked, and other Presbyterian missionaries, only less famous, early became one of the strongholds in America of the Presbyterianism which in Scotland was so partial to the *Pilgrim's Progress* as to justify Macaulay in declaring in his essay on Southey's edition of that work that, in the wildest parts of Scotland, the *Pilgrim's Progress* was the delight of the

[1] *Letters to a Y. R.*, 190. [2] *J. R.*, 9.
[3] *Sketches of Va.*, by Rev. Wm. Henry Foote (1850), 221.

peasantry. The only complete eighteenth century edition of all Bunyan's works, including the *Pilgrim's Progress*, that the present writer has ever seen, has, for some seventy years or so, been in the possession of his family at the home about fifteen miles from Roanoke, of which he has already spoken. In one of his letters from Roanoke to his friend, Dr. John Brockenbrough, dated Sept. 25, 1818, John Randolph mentions the fact that he had taken up a few days before at an "ordinary" the life of John Bunyan, which he had never read previously, and that he had found an exact coincidence in feelings and opinions of Bunyan and himself on certain matters of religious conviction.[1] Among the books that he advised his niece to read, was the *Pilgrim's Progress*[2]; and we have seen a list, in his own handwriting, now owned by Wm. Leigh, of Houston, Virginia, of the books in his library at Roanoke; and the *Pilgrim's Progress* was one of them. Indeed, his knowledge of Bunyan was not confined to the *Pilgrim's Progress*. In one letter to his niece he wrote: "*Robinson Crusoe* and Bunyan are admirable"[3]; in another (the one in which he advised her to read the *Pilgrim's Progress*) along with the *Whole Duty of Man*, Tillotson, Barrow, Jeremy Taylor, and Chalmers (whom he thought too florid) he commended to her attention not only the *Pilgrim's Progress* but Bunyan's *Holy War* also.[4] As to Baxter's *Saints' Everlasting Rest*, if it was never read by Randolph, it was only because it was not the readable masterpiece that the *Pilgrim's Progress* was. In a letter to the Society in London for Promoting Religious Knowledge among the Poor, dated Mar., 1755, Samuel Davies says that to some of the many houses in Virginia which lacked good books he had distributed, in addition to other works, *Baxter's Call*, etc.[5]; and in his *Sketches of Virginia*, the Rev. Wm. Henry Foote

[1] Garland, v. 2, 102.
[2] Jan. 19, 1822, Bryan MSS.
[3] Jan. 27, 1822, Bryan MSS.
[4] Jan. 19, 1822, Bryan MSS.
[5] *Sketches of Va.*, by Foote, 285.

states that he had scarcely ever visited a family, the heads or fathers of which belonged to Davies' congregation, in which he did not find books or remnants of books, such, among others, as Baxter's *Call to the Unconverted* and Baxter's *Saints' Everlasting Rest*[1]; and all, he adds, were studied with a care and attention which greatly promoted the improvement of the public. The idea, therefore, that Randolph, in his early life or otherwise, never saw and would have placed on his *Index Expurgatorius*, if he had, the *Pilgrim's Progress* and the *Saints' Everlasting Rest* is pure assumption, foreign to the spirit of religious tolerance, which has, from a very early period, been one of the most salient as well as ingratiating characteristics of Southside Virginia, and to the breadth of intellectual sympathy which, barring a few merely literary idiosyncrasies, rendered any English classic acceptable to Randolph.

What John Randolph says in his letter of Dec. 13, 1813, to Tudor about his visit to Bermuda is well worth transcribing:

"In 1784, the state of my health induced my mother to send me to Bermuda where I arrived in the month of July; and just twelve months afterwards she came over with her whole family and servants, and remained until Nov., 1785, when she encountered a long and boisterous voyage (in a wretched sloop) to Virginia. This laid the foundation of that disease which deprived me two years afterwards of the best mother that ever man had. My sojourn in Bermuda was of essential service to me in many respects. It was a respite from the austere rule of my stepfather and the tyranny hardly bearable of Maury; I acquired a temper not to brook tamely their unreasonable exactions. There was a good country gentleman's library in old Mr. Tucker's house (where I staid), and here I read many sterling English authors. Your father [Richard Randolph] and myself were always bookworms. It was a sort of bond to the affection that united us. Our first question at meeting

[1] *Sketches of Va.*, by Foote, 294.

was generally 'What have you read?'; 'Have you seen this or that book?' By going to Bermuda, however, I lost my Greek. I had just mastered the grammar perfectly when I left Williamsburg. Walking round the base (it was an iron railing that protected it) of Lord Bottetourt's statue, I had committed the Westminster grammar to memory, so as to be able to repeat every word of it. The pendulum of the great clock, which vibrated over my head, seemed to concentrate my attention on my book. My Bermudian tutor, Ewing, had no Greek class, and would not take the trouble of teaching a single boy."[1]

If the "rule" of St. George Tucker in 1784 was "austere," it did not, we can only repeat, leave behind it impressions upon the mind of John Randolph painful and permanent enough to prevent the intercourse between St. George Tucker and him during many subsequent years from being intimate and affectionate in the highest degree. The "old Mr. Tucker," mentioned in this letter, was the father of Henry Tucker, who became the President of His Majesty's Council and Commander-in-Chief in Bermuda; Thomas Tudor Tucker, who migrated to South Carolina before the American Revolution, and became a member of both the Old and New Congresses, and subsequently, for many years, Treasurer of the United States; Nathaniel, the author of *The Bermudian* and other poems, including the beginnings of an epic in twelve books on the American Revolution, of which he was a zealous partisan, that now lie mixed with much other poetic sentiment, of the same kind, at the bottom of the River of Time; and St. George Tucker, Randolph's stepfather. Henry had a son, Henry St. George, who was actually convicted of an attempted rape in the earlier part of his career, and yet afterwards became a distinguished figure in the Financial Administration of India, and Chairman of the Court of Directors of the East India Company. He, in turn, was the father of Charlotte Maria Tucker, better known as A. L. O. E.

[1] J. C. Grinnan MSS.; *Annual Register*, 1832–33, 440.

(A Lady of England), who was celebrated in her day as a writer of children's books and an enlightened missionary in India.[1]

St. George Tucker was born on July 10, 1752, the same year in which Frances Bland was born. In a letter to the Rev. Dr. Jeremy Belknap of Boston, he stated that his family had been established in Bermuda from the first settlement of the Island; that he was born at the very spot which Captain John Smith mentions under the name of the Overplus; that his mother still resided there; and that his eldest brother, upon her decease, would probably do the like.[2] This spot, thus commemorated by the real Romulus of Virginia, who would have been clubbed to death but for the intervention of Pocahontas, was, therefore, the spot where Randolph, one of her descendants, lived during his sojourn of eighteen months at Bermuda. In a manuscript book, kept by St. George Tucker, are these lines:

"Bermuda me genuit, Virginia fovit,
Illi pietate filiali semper devinctus;
Huic non civis devinctior alter."

"Bermuda bore me, Virginia nursed me;
To the one I shall always be bound by filial devotion,
But the other has no citizen more loyal."

True enough! No Virginian of his own day or ours will question that proud vaunt.

About 1770 St. George Tucker came to Virginia, and, after pursuing first an academic, and then a legal, course of study at William and Mary, settled down to the practice of law in Williamsburg. His grandson, John Randolph Tucker, is our authority for the statement that, when the

[1] *Va. Law Register*, v. 1, Mar., 1896, No. 11, 789 *et seq.*; *Mag. of Amer. Hist.*, v. 7, 36; St. George Tucker to Rev. Dr. Jeremy Belknap, Apr. 3, 1797, *Collections of Mass. Hist. Soc.*, v. 3, 5th series, 425; *Dictionary of Nat'l. Biog.*, v. 57, 279–280.

[2] Apr. 3, 1797, *Colls. of Mass. Hist. Soc., supra.*

American Revolution broke out, he conducted a secret expedition to Bermuda which was so successful as to secure and bring back to America a large quantity of military stores that helped to eke out Washington's scanty resources at the siege of Boston. Later, he became the secretary and aide-de-camp of General Thomas Nelson, and still later, as we have seen, he took part in the Battle of Guilford Court House and in the siege of Yorktown and the military movements which immediately preceded it. After the close of the Revolution, he resided at Matoax until the death of Randolph's mother in 1788. In that year, he returned to Williamsburg, and became a Judge of the General Court of Virginia, and a professor of law at William and Mary. The latter appointment meant something more than such an appointment ordinarily does; for he succeeded the learned and upright lawyer, scholar, and statesman, Chancellor George Wythe, to whose virtues and talents Jefferson has paid such a glowing tribute[1]; and who lived long enough to have Henry Clay for his amanuensis. Subsequently, he was appointed one of the Revisers of the Virginia Statutes, and, with James Madison and Edmund Randolph, was a delegate to the Annapolis Convention of 1786 which proved to be the *fœtus* of the Federal Convention of 1787. In 1803, upon the death of Edmund Pendleton, he was made the President Judge of the Court of Appeals of Virginia. To have had Edmund Pendleton as well as George Wythe as a predecessor in office, was an honor that could have been accorded in Virginia at that time to no one but a man of eminent talents; and such, in sober truth, was St. George Tucker, as his judicial opinions, his Dissertation on Slavery, his letters to Dr. Jeremy Belknap on the same subject, and his edition of Blackstone's Commentaries show. In 1811, he resigned his seat on the Bench of the Court of Appeals of Virginia, and, in 1813, he was appointed by President

[1] T. J. to John Saunderson, Aug. 31, 1820, *Works* (Mem. Ed.), v. 1, 165.

Madison Judge of the District Court of the United States for Virginia. This position, too, he resigned, being compelled to do so by ill health, and the rest of his life was spent in retirement at Warminster, in Nelson County, Virginia, where he died on Nov. 10, 1827.[1] Edgewood, near Warminster was the home of Joseph C. Cabell, the friend and collaborator in the creation of the University of Virginia of Jefferson; and a man believed by Virginians to have needed only a seat in the Executive or Legislative councils of the nation to have left behind him something more than the great local reputation which his long, distinguished and fruitful service in the Virginia State Legislature earned for him.[2] After the death of St. George Tucker, Cabell spoke of him in a letter in terms as reverential as "that great and venerable man"; language into which a man of such solid parts and character would never have been hurried by mere personal affection or *post-mortem* extravagance.[3] The connection between Cabell and St. George Tucker originated in the fact that Cabell was the husband of Mary W. Carter (*a*), the daughter of St. George Tucker's second wife, Lelia S. Carter, by a former husband. Mrs. Carter was the daughter of Sir Peyton Skipwith, Baronet, and was married first to George Carter of Corotoman, on the Rappahannock River, and subsequently, on Oct. 8, 1791, some three years after the death of Randolph's mother, to St. George Tucker.[4] They are both buried at Warminster. "This excellent lady," the prayer book of the first Mrs. Tucker curiously enough is made to certify, "survived her husband nearly ten years, having lived a pattern of every Christian Virtue and lady-like excellence."[5] A considerable amount of

[1] For full particulars relating to St. G. T. *vide Va. Law Register*, Mar., 1896, No. 11, 789 *et seq.;* also *Wm. and Mary Quarterly*, v. 17, 268.

[2] *The Cabells and their Kin*, by Brown, 263.

[3] To Mrs. Gouverneur Morris, Sept. 6, 1831, U. of Va. Library.

[4] *The Cabells and their Kin, supra.*

[5] *Wm. and Mary Quarterly*, v. 17, 268.

verse written by St. George Tucker is still in existence; but it is given to few lawyers to win the favor of both Themis and the Heavenly Muse. The best poetical performance of his, so far as our knowledge of his metrical productions go, are the lines entitled "Resignation." They read as follows:

"Days of my youth! Ye have glided away;
Locks of my youth! Ye are frosted and gray;
Eyes of my youth! Your keen sight is no more;
Cheeks of my youth! Ye are furrowed all o'er;
Strength of my youth! All your vigor is gone;
Thoughts of my youth! Your gay visions are flown.

"Days of my youth! I wish not your recall;
Locks of my youth! I'm content ye shall fall;
Eyes of my youth! Ye much evil have seen;
Cheeks of my youth! Bathed in tears have you been;
Thoughts of my youth! Ye have led me astray;
Strength of my youth! Why lament your decay?

"Days of my age! Ye will shortly be past;
Pains of my age! But awhile can ye last;
Joys of my age! In true wisdom delight;
Eyes of my age! Be religion your light;
Thoughts of my age! Dread ye not the cold sod;
Hopes of my age! Be ye fixed on your God."[1]

Good, sweet, home-made raspberry cordial these lines have long been deemed by the American reader. They are certainly more wholesome, whether equally inspiring or not, than the bubbling, sparkling wine of many worse men who were better poets!

A fitting conclusion for this sketch of St. George Tucker may be found in John P. Kennedy's *Life of Wm. Wirt:* "The Judge," he says, "was distinguished for his scholastic acquirements, his taste and wit, and was greatly endeared to the society of his friends by a warm-hearted, impulsive nature which gave a peculiar strength to his attachments."[2]

[1] *Va. Law Register*, v. 1, Mar., 1896, No. 11, 795. [2] V. 1, 120.

Apart from the library at "old Mr. Tucker's," there is good reason to believe that Randolph's visit to Bermuda was a profitable one to him. After his return to the United States, he wrote to one of his young Bermuda friends: "I am glad to hear that Mr. Ewing [his Bermuda tutor] has so increased his school. He is a very worthy man and has great abilities."[1] This same letter indicates that, while Randolph was among the Bermudians, a delightfully simple, refined and hospitable people then as now, he both freely bestowed and received friendship and affection.

"You conjecture very properly, my ever dear Jack," he said, "in thinking it [has] given me great pleasure to hear from my friends in Bermuda. Indeed, I should be destitute of every feeling of gratitude were I ever to forget their innumerable kindnesses to me during a stay of eighteen months in the Island."

Later on, this letter says:

"We had heard before the receipt of your letter of the death of our good and much lamented Aunt Campbell. My best affections to Aunt Tucker. Tell her that it is impossible that I should ever forget her and that I am fully sensible of the affection she entertains for me."

In another letter to Jack, he sends his love to his sister Fanny, who was on a visit to Bermuda at the time, to the different members of Jack's family, and to his other friends —"Too numerous to particularize," he adds.[2] Since the Tuckers have always been a family of the best social standing in Bermuda, young Randolph, whilst there, was admitted not only to the agreeable intercourse which their own family circle, itself, held out to him, but also to the society of their friends. Whatever he may have been at Maury's school, when embittered by homesickness,

[1] Letter from J. R. to Jack ——, Apr. 28, 1789, N. Y. Pub. Libr.
[2] Dec. 6, 1789, N. Y. Pub. Libr.

rude surroundings and class jealousy, and whatever he may have become in the course of his adult life, after sorrow, disease and disappointment had been his portion, the correspondence, to which we are referring, makes it perfectly clear that in Bermuda he found himself surrounded by thoroughly congenial conditions, and was simply a bright, cordial, healthy-minded boy. Nor can we doubt that a boy so instinct with poetry, so richly gifted with imagination, must have faced the landscapes of that island paradise with something of the fresh, rapt surprise which caused Miranda—she of that other "still-vext Bermoothes," built up from the azure depths of the Great Poet's eye in fine frenzy rolling, to exclaim when she first saw the "brave form" of radiant manhood, "What is't? A Spirit?" "I have been all my life," he said at a later day, "the creature of impulse, the sport of chance, the victim of my own uncontrolled and uncontrollable sensations; of a poetic temperament. I admire and pity all who possess this temperament."[1] Possessing it as he did, can we doubt that, young as he was, his nature must have been kindled, and the fountains of his future eloquence fed, by the Bermuda Islands, where "eternal spring enamels everything," their remote and lonely situation, "in the ocean's bosom unespied," in those vast wastes of hurricane- and once buccaneer-haunted waters, their glorious fringes of green, blue, and purple seas, their lovely bays and coves, their coral foundations, their marvellously diversified surface, their tide-laved grottoes, their cedars, clustering in little groves, or leading the eye down between green walls to the ubiquitous ocean, and exhaling delicious fragrance which the winds waft across the waves to the approaching ship, their frostless clime, their perennial bloom, their fish that vie in color with their flowers, their stately palm trunks, their whimsical mangrove copses, their tropical fruits, their snowy houses, and all those other

[1] Garland, v. 1, 15.

visual objects that make Bermuda so entrancing to both our outward and our inward vision. Indeed, that Randolph's mind was profoundly affected by what he saw in Bermuda we may well infer from a letter which he wrote to Elizabeth T. Coalter in 1828.

"In all Lord Byron's description of the ocean," he said, "I recognize my own feelings. When a boy, I too laid my hand upon his mane, and was as familiar with him as his Lordship could possibly have been. I spent some hours every day in swimming and have sat for half a day on a cliff watching the ruffled face of the Atlantic or the coming storm (as when at Bermuda). No one who has only seen the sea on this side the Gulf Stream can have an adequate notion of it. The blue rushing of the arrowy Rhone or the Mediterranean itself can not be more transparent. I have seen the first and once promised myself that I should behold the shores of Italy and Spain, but my travels are ended."[1]

With the return of Randolph to the United States, we take up again his letter to Tudor of Dec. 13, 1813.

"After our return," he says, "we went back to Williamsburg; your father continuing to board with Maury, but attending Mr. Wythe in Greek, Mathematics and, I think, Latin also. Soon afterwards, he entered college. We were at the Grammar School kept in the old capitol, which has been since pulled down to save the expense of repairing the hall where Henry spoke and Independence was declared. The shocking barbarity of Maury towards my brother Theodorick drove him from the school (our mother was then in New York for her health), and soon afterwards I left it. Having spent some months at home, we (Theodorick and myself) were sent in March, 1787, to Princeton, where we were joined in the summer by your father. Dr. Witherspoon, in order to make the most out of us, put Theo. and myself in the Grammar School, although we were further advanced than any of the Freshmen

[1] Nov. 1, 1828, Bryan MSS.

JUDGE ST. GEORGE TUCKER

From the copper plate by Charles Balthazar.
Julien Févre de St. Memin.

or most of the Sophomores. In this subterranean abode of noise and misrule, I was pent for five long months, and, in September, was transferred to the college with habits acquired in that school by no means propitious to study. At Christmas, Theo. and I went to New York to spend the little money we had hoarded for that purpose (little it was since Witherspoon's necessities drove him to embezzle our funds), and were reached in a few days by a letter from your father, enclosing one from our mother, which summoned us to her dying bedside. We hastened home, and saw her for the last time. . . . In May, 1788, Theo. and I were sent to college in New York. Your father came over here [Richmond] to attend the debates of the Convention on the question of adopting or rejecting the Federal Constitution of 1787. This visit gave rise to the attachment between himself and your mother which terminated in their marriage about 18 months afterwards. Your father joined us at New York. He was in his nineteenth year and the most manly youth and most elegant gentleman that I ever saw. Mrs. Bingham, of Philadelphia, used to send him invitations to her parties, and he often went from New York to that city to them. Yet he was neither debauched nor dissipated. He was regular, studious, above low company of any sort, 'the great vulgar or the small.' His apparel, according to Lord Raleigh's advice, was 'costly not fine,' and you might see in the old attendant, Syphax, whom he carried with him to New York, that his master was a gentleman. Columbia College was not yet recovered from the shock of the Revolution. It was just emerging out of chaos. The professor of Humanity (Cochrane now in the College of Nova Scotia) was an Irishman, educated at Trinity College, Dublin, and a most accomplished scholar. With him, I studied as a private pupil, paying eight dollars a month (out of my own allowance for clothes, etc.) for the privilege. I had devoted the whole vacation at Princeton (1787) to an attempt at regaining my Greek. I now (July, 1788), burning with the thirst of knowledge (which I was not allowed to slake at the fountain of Nassau), and emulous of literary distinction, set seriously to work, and was greatly encouraged by my tutor who was or affected to be amazed at the rapidity of my progress. To my irreparable

loss he left college about two or three months after I had entered myself as his private pupil. Your father's return to Virginia left me without a friend. Where, will you ask, was my Uncle Theodorick? Alas! my poor brother, he differed in every respect from your noble father. Of all things in the world, he detested most a book. Devoted to pleasure and fun, he not only set me a bad example but (with his dissolute companions) absolutely prevented me from reading. Often have they forced the door of my study and tossed the books over the floor; sometimes out of the window. In two years, he had undermined his constitution and destroyed his health forever. After lingering a long time, a mere skeleton of himself, he died at Bizarre in February, 1792, just before the birth of your brother, St. George. My guardian, for under the impulse of the ascendancy he had acquired over me I had chosen Mr. Tucker as such, was so scanty in his supplies that I became necessitous, of course unhappy, and (why should I conceal it) gradually fell into the habits and way of life of my unfortunate brother; with the difference [that I] continued to read but books of mere amusement only; enervating and almost destroying my intellectual powers and vitiating my taste. Your father was married the last day of the year 1789, and, in the summer following, Theo. and I left New York for Virginia. In consequence of my mother's death, her husband left Matoax to reside in Williamsburg where Edmund Randolph, just appointed Attorney-general of the United States, at that time lived. He proposed to Mr. Tucker that I should study law under him, and accordingly I went to Philadelphia in the month of September, 1790 (the year of the removal of Congress from New York). I had seen the old Congress expire and the new government rise like a Phœnix from its ashes. I saw the coronation (such in fact it was) of Gen. Washington in March, 1789, and heard Ames and Madison, when they first took their seats in the House of Representatives. Congress met at Philadelphia, and Edm. R. was too much engrossed by politics and his own receptions to think of me. He too embezzled my funds which Mr. T. intrusted to him for my use. Had [they] been faithfully applied, [they] were adequate to my decent support (only $400.00 per annum). For what cause

I know not Mr. Randolph put into my hands, by way of preparation for the work of law, Hume's Metaphysical works. I had a great propensity for that sort of reading. The conduct and conversation of Mr. Tucker and his friends, as Col. Innes and Beverley Randolph (every other word an oath), had early in life led me to regard Religion as the imposture of priest-craft. I had become a deist and by consequence an atheist! (I shudder whilst I write it, altho. my intentions were pure and I was honestly seeking after the truth.) I say "by consequence," because I am convinced that deism necessarily leads by the fairest induction to that conclusion. My late friend, Jos. Bryan, was placed by Major Pierce Butler, then in the Senate from South Carolina, also under the direction of Mr. Randolph to read law. The Atty. Gen. had no office, and we were to read at our rooms such books as he pointed out. After getting almost through the first book of Blackstone, Bryan and myself abandoned a profession for which neither of us had been qualified by a regular education, and commenced men of pleasure, plunging into the gayety that fills the mouth with blasphemy; the heart with ——! In July, 1792, I returned to Virginia from want of means for remaining in Philadelphia. In this town [Richmond], on my way to Williamsburg, I was taken with scarlet fever and brought to the brink of the grave. So few charms had life for me, so strong was the disgust that I had taken to the world that I was indifferent to the issue of my disease. Reaching Williamsburg, I saw for the first time Mr. Tucker's new wife, a shrew and a vixen. I shall never forget the chilling coldness of my reception. In a few days, I set out for Bizarre, and was once more restored to the society of the fondest of brothers. The events that soon followed are those which I [have] already related to you and which you say most truly can never be forgotten. In July, 1793, I again returned, at my guardian's instance, to while away the time of my minority, and, after encountering the horrors of the yellow fever (which broke out a few days after my arrival and drove my friend Bryan to Georgia), I passed the winter less unpleasantly than the two former which I had spent there, and left the right angle city in April or May, 1794. . . . I omitted to state that, in the winter of 1792–3, I spent some weeks at

William and Mary College, and made a slight beginning in Mathematics and Natural Philosophy."[1]

The acrid words in this letter with respect to the second Mrs. Tucker must have been due to some trivial circumstance which arrested Randolph's attention only slightly at the time, but afterwards operated retroactively with morbid force upon his mind, when fermenting with its resentments against St. George Tucker. The first mention that he makes of this lady is in a letter from Philadelphia to his youthful friend Henry Rutledge, who had been a fellow-collegian of his at Columbia.

"Letters from Virginia," he wrote, "inform me of the approaching nuptials of my father and Mrs. Carter, a young, beautiful, amiable and rich widow who, to crown the whole, has no children. This event has given me great happiness, as for a long time my dear little brothers and sisters have sorely experienced the loss of an affectionate and tender mother. . . . Such a mother, from my personal knowledge of the lady, I flatter myself they will find in the intended spouse of Mr. Tucker."[2]

The writer, of course, was mistaken in supposing that Mrs. Carter was childless. In addition to her daughter, who married Joseph C. Cabell, she had a son, Charles Carter, who became a physician.[3] From this time on until the breach with St. George Tucker, Randolph, in his letters to his stepfather, sent quite frequently cordial, and sometimes affectionate, messages to Mrs. Tucker. Then, perhaps, in ruminating over the wrongs, of which he accused St. George Tucker, he may have remembered that, when he first greeted her, after her second marriage, she had failed for the moment to respond to an effusive outflow of affection which she was not expecting from a mere stepson

[1] Grinnan MSS.; *Annual Register*, 1832–33, 440.
[2] March 25, 1791, *Pa. Hist. Soc.*
[3] *Bristol Parish*, 227.

of her husband, but which would have appeared natural enough to her, if she had only been fully aware of the intimate and affectionate relationship which existed at that time between Randolph and his stepfather. And with this as a starting point, it was not a difficult thing after the alienation from St. George Tucker, for a disposition like Randolph's, when thoroughly dominated by distorting reflections and emotions, to magnify petty manifestations of impatience on the part of Mrs. Tucker into shrewish outbursts. All this, to be sure, is mere speculation; but it, at any rate, illustrates well enough for our purpose the peculiar psychology which Randolph brought to any matter involved in one of his personal enmities. Randolph's Diary also contains this entry written sometime after the year 1815. "Went to Wmsburg in July (1792), and for the first time saw my stepfather's new wife. What a successor to my mother!" Fortunately, the amiable character of this Mrs. Tucker is almost as well established as that of the first. Many years after the death of St. George Tucker the hand of some Tucker, sprung from his first union, entered the striking tribute to the virtues of the second Mrs. Tucker which we have already quoted in the Frances Bland prayer book—the same prayer book which, in recording the death of Frances Bland Tucker, describes her as "that most amiable and beloved of women."[1] There is evidence that she was held in tender affection by Mrs. John Randolph Bryan [Elizabeth T. Coalter]; and by John Randolph Bryan himself, who admired and loved Randolph living, and admired, loved, and defended him dead, and knew a lady from a person, who was not one, as well as Randolph did, the second Mrs. Tucker has been pronounced "a lady who had few equals and no superiors in this or any other country."[2]

The only written evidence that we can find bearing

[1] *Wm. and Mary Quarterly*, v. 17, 268.
[2] *Richmond Dispatch*, May 20, 1878.

upon the accusation of embezzlement against Dr. Witherspoon, made in the letter to Tudor, is a letter from Theodorick Bland Randolph, written to St. George Tucker from New York, and dated Jan. 18, 1790. It says:

"I saw Dr. Witherspoon not long since, and mentioned to him that you wished for a settlement between him and my father's estate, and that you had written to him several times on that subject. He answered that he had received no letter from you, but that he was ready to settle, and that there was a balance in his hands which he was ready to pay to your order."[1]

As John and Theodorick left Princeton in 1787, the delay in the payment of this balance, taken in connection with Randolph's unpleasant recollections of Princeton, is quite enough to explain his statement about the good doctor; who, however, does not seem to have been guilty of any offence worse than that of a little academic inattention to business. Randolph's charge of embezzlement against Edmund Randolph, whom he disliked, is, we do not doubt, equally ill-founded. When Attorney General and Secretary of State of the United States, Edmund Randolph, with his small salaries and the cessation of the handsome professional income which his learning and skill as a lawyer always commanded, when he was actively engaged in private practice, was at times seriously pinched for money, and his integrity was assailed by one of the basest partisan conspiracies in American History; but he was a man of honor, and, in devoting many years of his life, after he came to be connected with the National Government, to the liquidation of an onerous debt incurred while he was in office, for which he was only technically responsible, he made sacrifices for his honor such as not many public men have ever made. Few handsomer tributes have been paid to the character of anyone than that paid by Jefferson to

[1] *Va. Hist. Soc.*

the character of Edmund Randolph, whose lack of decision disgusted him very much at times, and whose understanding he, by no means, rated very highly.[1] "His narrative [Edmund Randolph's vindication of himself against the Fauchet insinuations of corruption]," he said, "is so straight and plain that even those who did not know him will acquit him of the charge of bribery. Those who knew him had done it from the first."[2] (*a*) Randolph's charge against Edmund Randolph is that the funds entrusted to him by St. George Tucker for Randolph's use were not faithfully applied. As the arrangement involved a discretionary trust and an accounting, and trusts and accountings involve no little chance for disagreement between the parties, especially when one of them is a high-tempered youth, and, as Randolph was not in the habit of shading his words very nicely, when expressing his opinion of a man for whom he entertained an aversion, we should want to know something more about this transaction before passing judgment upon it.

The charges of religious skepticism and profanity, made by the letter to Tudor against St. George Tucker and his friends, including James Innes and Beverley Randolph, were probably not altogether unfounded. Randolph, as we have said, never told untruths; small things simply loomed large sometimes through the fog of his prejudices and hatreds. At the close of the eighteenth century, the form of religious infidelity known as French Infidelity, because of its origin in the writings of Voltaire and other French skeptics, was very common throughout the United States, including Williamsburg; and it is not unlikely that St. George Tucker uttered some other oaths besides the judicial ones which he took on the occasions when he was elevated to the bench; for, while all gentlemen in the eighteenth century did not swear like "our army in

[1] *Edmund Randolph*, by Moncure D. Conway, 190.

[2] T. J. to Wm. B. Giles, *Works*, v. 9, 315.

Flanders," most of them, we imagine, swore a little at times. If either his skepticism or his profanity, however, had been very pronounced, it is hardly probable that he would have occupied such high judicial positions, or would have enjoyed such a high judicial reputation as he did. In the main, in any view of the case, Randolph, we suspect, caught his attack of infidelity not from St. George Tucker but from the same tainted air from which the Judge caught his, if he ever had a well-developed attack at all. The James Innes mentioned in the letter to Tudor was the Innes to whom Patrick Henry paid his memorable tribute in the Virginia Convention of 1788, when he said: "That gentleman is endowed with great eloquence, splendid, magnificent and sufficient to shake the human mind."[1] And the Beverley Randolph, mentioned in the letter, was the Beverley Randolph who was one of the Governors of Virginia, and of whom after the battle of Guilford Court House St. George Tucker, who also bore himself gallantly in that battle, wrote to his wife, "He was himself. I need say no more."[2]

Theodorick Randolph yielded altogether, and John Randolph temporarily, not to the bad and brutal habits, bred by contact with negroes, and the cockfighting, gouging, and other vicious practices, which Henry Adams assumes to have been more or less inseparable from Virginia plantation life in the latter part of the eighteenth century,[3] but, singular to say, to the immemorial urban vices which lurked in two towns beyond the confines of Virginia.

In view of the strictures in the letter from John Randolph to Tudor on Theodorick's conduct when at Columbia, it is but fair to the boy's memory to say that the letters which he wrote at this time to his stepfather bring him before us in an attractive way. "When we get into col-

[1] *Debates of the Va. Convention of 1788* (2d Ed.), 464.
[2] *Mag. of Amer. History*, v. 7, 41. [3] *J. R.*, 6, 11.

lege," he wrote to St. George Tucker from Princeton, "I shall study very hard, not only to be the best scholar in the class but to give you and Mama all the *pleasure* in my power. We are all in high expectations of seeing you next spring."[1] And the letter concludes, "Kiss sister for me and tell her I am very much obliged to her for the letter she wrote us. Give my love to Miss Maria, Henry, Tudor, and saucy Beverley." In a subsequent letter, written from Columbia, he is outspokenly chapfallen over the refusal of his stepfather to allow John and himself to come home for a fortnight's or three weeks' vacation; but he has the manly grace to add, notwithstanding the fact that all his things had even been packed up for the journey: "But I submit, if not cheerfully, willingly, because I am sure that you know what is best for us better than we do ourselves; and that you would deny us nothing which would not be prejudicial to us."[2] And he mentions in the same letter that he had sent some books to St. George Tucker's children by Captain Seargeant's sloop. In another letter, written some ten months later from New York, he says:

"I was very much hurt last night at seeing Uncle [his Uncle Theodorick Bland or Thomas Tudor Tucker] and Cousin Thomas Randolph and brother Jack receive letters from him [his brother Richard] without having one myself; and, in addition to this mortification, he took no more notice of me in either of the letters than if no such person was in existence. I have heard from him more than once by letters to other people. If I may judge by his letters, I should not stand at any rate higher than sixth on the list of his friends in New York. I have been very sick for sometime past, nor have I entirely recovered yet; during my sickness I suffered very much for the want of a servant to attend me."[3]

In another letter, written two or three months later from New York, he refers to a report "very much to his dis-

[1] Sept. 13, 1787, *Va. Hist. Soc.*
[2] Oct. 14, 1788, *Va. Hist. Soc.*
[3] Aug. 20, 1789, *Va. Hist. Soc.*

credit" (to use his words), which had reached the ears of Judge Tucker, and was said to have obtained a wide circulation in Virginia. Without denying the report, he contents himself with a renewed expression of his desire to enter upon his medical education at Philadelphia, and reveals again the affectionate disposition which displays itself in all his letters in the words: "Give my love to brother Richd who has never thought it worth his while to write to me since my departure. Kiss all the children for me."[1] The last letter in the series, written on the eve of his return to Virginia to die, discloses the fact that it was the intention of Judge Tucker to send him to Edinburgh for a medical education.[2] And in this connection, we might add, that, if John Randolph deemed Theodorick, when they were in New York, dissipated, a letter from John to his stepfather, dated New York, Dec. 25, 1788, which is interesting enough to be quoted in full, shows that his brother Richard, who had previously left Columbia and returned to Virginia, deemed John lazy. This letter is as follows:

"I received my dear papa's affectionate epistle and was sorry to find that he thought himself neglected. I assure you, my dear sir, that there has scarcely a fortnight elapsed since Uncle's absence without my writing to you, and I would have paid dearly for you to have received them. I sent them by the post and indeed there has been no other opportunity except by Captain Crozier, and I did not neglect that. Be well assured, my dear Sir, our expenses, since our arrival here, have been enormous and by far greater than our estate, especially loaded as it is with debt, can bear. However, I flatter myself, my dear papa, that, upon looking over the accounts, you will find that my share is by comparison trifling, and hope that, by the wise admonitions of so affectionate a parent, and one who has our welfare and interest so much at

[1] Nov. 12, 1789, *Va. Hist. Soc.*
[2] Jan. 18, 1790, *Va. Hist. Soc.*

heart, we may be able to shun the rock of prodigality upon which so many people continually split and by which the unhappy victim is reduced not only to poverty but also to despair and all the horrors attending it. Brother writes you that I am lazy. I assure you, dear papa, he has been egregiously mistaken. I attend every lecture that the class does. Not one of the professors have ever found me dull with my business or even said that I was irregular. All my leisure time I devote to the study of . . . and then read the poets from five o'clock in the morning till twelve. I am constantly reading in my. . . . The rest of my time is allotted to college duty. If brother Richard had written you that I did nothing all the vacation, he would have been much in the dark. Neither was it possible for me. We lived in this large building without a soul in it but ourselves, and it was so desolate and dreary that I could not bear to be in it. I always was afraid that some robber, of which we have a plenty (as you will see by the enclosed paper), was coming to kill me after they made a draught on the house. Be so good, my dear sir, when it is convenient, to send me the debates of the Convention of our State. My love to the families of Butler—Cawsons. My love to Mr. Tucker, Jr., Miss Maria and the children. Tell them I wish them a merry Christmas. That you, my ever dear papa, may enjoy many happy ones, is the sincere wish of your ever affectionate son."[1]

What John Randolph, then a boy of but fifteen years of age, who was, however, destined only some five years later in a duel to plant nonchalantly in the body of an antagonist a bullet which he carried to his grave, has to say in this letter about debt and the loneliness of the great building, in which he and Theodorick lodged, has been accepted by Henry Adams as indicative of a nature "easily affected by fears, whether of murderers or of poverty."[2] There are few boys of fifteen, we imagine, however brave, who would not feel a little uncomfortable at times at night, when house-breaking was rife, at finding himself all alone except for the companionship of a brother, very little older than

[1] Bouldin, 219. [2] *J. R.*, 17.

himself, in a great, dreary, desolate barn of a building from which all the ordinary sights and sounds of school activity had fled with the setting in of a school vacation. A little nervousness under such circumstances, especially when avowed with manly frankness, might well exist without justifying the belief that it was the manifestation of a general lack of firmness or hardihood. Nor should the fact be overlooked that, in this letter, John Randolph was defending himself to his stepfather from the charge of laziness made against him by his brother, and that, in doing so, he might naturally enough have been a little too eager to vindicate his industry at the expense of his self-possession. But, really, to defend the courage of John Randolph, youth or man, is like defending the chastity of Lucretia or the ascetic constancy of St. Simeon Stylites. If his heart did fail him on any occasion, when he was a lad of fifteen, to such an extent as to constitute a serious reproach to his firmness of character, the incident is exceptional enough to be classed with the circumstances which once led him when older to recall the fact that so intrepid a soldier as Mark Antony had run away at Actium.[1] Even after due allowance is made for the infirmities of his time, and the imperious nature of the duelling code, to which he unqualifiedly subscribed, there is much in the bitter personal feuds into which he was drawn, in the course of his combative career, largely by the promptings of his own ill-regulated passions, that calls for severe condemnation; but, as we shall abundantly see, Randolph was, to borrow a homely phrase from the people among whom he lived, and by whom it was considered almost as honorable to violate any injunction of the Decalogue as to show the white feather, "pluck to the backbone." Of him it can be said, in the words of Emerson, as truly as of any public man in the history of the United States,

[1] J. R. to Jos. H. Nicholson, Aug. 15, 1809, Nicholson MSS., Lib. Cong.

"Never poor, beseeching glance,
Shamed that sculptured countenance."

There are other sources besides the letter to Tudor from which information about the life of Randolph at Princeton can be obtained—for example, a letter from him preserved by Garland:

"At Princeton College," he says in this letter, "where I spent a few months (1787), the prize of elocution was borne away by mouthers and ranters. I never would speak if I could possibly avoid it, and, when I could not, repeated without gesture the shortest piece that I had committed to memory. I remember some verses from Pope and the first anonymous letter from Newburg made up the sum and substance of my spoutings; and I can yet repeat much of the first epistle (to Lord Chatham) of the former and a good deal of the latter. I was then as conscious of my superiority over my competitors in delivery and elocution as I am now that they are sunk in oblivion; and I despised the award and the umpires in the bottom of my heart. I believe that there is nowhere such foul play as among professors and schoolmasters; more especially if they are priests. I have had a contempt for college honors ever since. My mother's death drew me from Princeton where I had been forced to be idle, being put into a noisy, wretched grammar school for Dr. Witherspoon's emolument: (I was ten times a better scholar than the master of it); and, in June, 1788, I was sent to Columbia College, New York; just then having completed my fifteenth year."[1]

It is words like these that caused Moncure D. Conway to assert in his work on Edmund Randolph that Randolph hated intensely everyone who tried to instruct him[2]; but this is not a fact. The high respect, in which he held Ewing, his Bermuda tutor, has already been brought to the attention of the reader. And, in this very letter, in addition to what he wrote to Tudor about Cochrane, he comments upon his retirement from Columbia in these em-

[1] Garland, v. 1, 23. [2] P. 137.

phatic words: "Next to the loss of my mother and my being sent to Walker Maury's school (and one other that I shall not name) this was the greatest misfortune of my life." And a misfortune it truly was, for in this letter, too, he exclaims: "Never did higher literary ambition burn in human bosom!" (than in his own); and a little later in it he reveals in the following words the extent to which Cochrane acquired over him the ascendancy of a true schoolmaster; that is of one of those rare teachers, compounded of firmness, justice, and sympathy, who, to use the language of Kent in Lear, have that in their countenances which we would fain (partly from respect, and partly from affection) call "master": "We read Demosthenes together, and I used to cry for indignation at the success of Philip's arts and arms over the liberties of Greece." But Randolph did not cease to read Demosthenes when Cochrane left Columbia; for on April 28, 1789, he wrote to his Bermuda friend Jack: "I at present am studying Algebra, Cicero *de Officiis* and Orations, Lucian, Xenophon, and Demosthenes."[1]

The truth is that John Randolph was much more likely to be right than wrong in the exercise of his judgment about his teachers. He was not only quick but precise in his mental operations and early acquired a general fund of knowledge which only some thoroughly trained master, like Cochrane, could afford to belittle. Throughout his life, where his outlook was not blurred by prejudice or personal hostility, he exhibited a remarkable capacity for appraising human ability at its true value. At a time when Wirt's *Life of Patrick Henry* was considered a literary masterpiece by thousands of Americans, he pronounced it "a wretched piece of fustian," as to a great degree it was.[2] His admiration was never wasted on second-rate or third-rate men, however showy or self-assertive. He enter-

[1] N. Y. Pub. Lib.

[2] J. R. to Francis Scott Key, Feb. 9, 1818, Garland, v. 2, 96.

tained a marked admiration for Alexander Hamilton,[1] John Marshall,[2] and Rufus King,[3] though they were all Federalists; no man had a higher opinion of the talents of Albert Gallatin,[4] William H. Crawford,[5] and William Pinkney[6]; and he recognized instinctively the ability of Martin Van Buren[7] and Levi Woodbury[8] even before the general public fully did. A clever bank teller does not distinguish genuine from counterfeit coin more certainly than Randolph did a real from a spurious reputation. His caustic observations on the oratorical exercises at Princeton and the deficiencies of some of his teachers smack a little of conceit and arrogance, but, on the whole, they were not far from the truth we venture to say.

The discouragements, which Randolph had to contend with in acquiring an education, he sums up in a pointed manner in a letter to Theodore Dudley:

"At your time of life, my son," he wrote, "I was even more ineligibly placed than you are, and would have given worlds for quiet seclusion and books. I never had either. You will smile when I tell you that the first map that I almost ever *saw* was one of Virginia when I was nearly fifteen; and that I never (until the age of manhood) possessed any treatise on geography other than an obsolete Gazetteer of Salmon and my sole atlas were the five maps, if you will honour them with that name, contained in the Gazetteer, each not quite so big as this page, of the three great eastern divisions and two western ones of the earth. The best and only Latin dictionary that I ever owned you now have. I had a small Greek lexicon bought with my own pocket money, and many other books acquired in the same way (from 16 to 20 years of age); but these were merely books of amusement. I never was with any preceptor, one only excepted (and he left the school after I had been there

[1] Garland, v. 2, 296. [2] *Ibid.* [3] *Id.*, 192.
[4] J. R. to St. George Tucker, Jan. 15, 1802, Lucas MSS.
[5] J. R. to Jos. H. Nicholson, Jan. 17, 1812, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.
[6] J. R. to L. W. Tazewell, Feb. 22, 1826, L. W. Tazewell, Jr., MSS.
[7] *Ibid.* [8] *Ibid.*

about two months), who would deserve to be called a Latin or Greek scholar; and I never had any master of modern languages but an old Frenchman (some gentleman's valet I suppose) who could neither write nor spell. I mention these things, my child, that you may not be disheartened. 'Tis true that I am a very ignorant man for one who is thought to have received a learned education."[1]

Expressions like the last have been eagerly seized upon by partisan writers to disparage Randolph's general attainments; nevertheless they were not only quite remarkable but were as readily at his command as the currency in his pocket. To the loss of Cochrane and to the interference of Theodorick's dissipated habits with his studies he ascribed elsewhere than in the letter to Tudor the declining interest in his scholastic duties which came over him before he left New York.

"From that time forward," he says in a letter, "I began to neglect study (Cochrane left no one but Dr. Johnson, the President, of any capacity, behind him, and he was in the Senate of the United States from March, 1789), read only the trash of the circulating library, and never have read since except for amusement, unless for a few weeks at Williamsburg, at the close of 1793; and all my dear mother's fond anticipations, and all my own noble and generous aspirations, have been quenched; and, if not entirely, if a single spark or languid flame yet burns, it is owing to my accidental election to Congress five and twenty years ago."[2]

Indeed, as the letter to Tudor shows, according to his own candid confession, Randolph, to use his very words, gradually fell into the habits and way of life of his unfortunate brother. These in his case, according to the same confession, if anything, became worse, when Theodorick had taken his wasted constitution back to Virginia and

[1] Feb. 15, 1806, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 13.
[2] Garland, v. 1, 24.

Randolph had found himself alone in Philadelphia after the removal of the Federal Government from New York to that City in 1790.

"Of all the remedies for ennui," he once said sadly in a letter from Roanoke to Theodore Dudley, "dissipation is the least efficient and the most destructive of the moral as well as the physical constitution of man. Yet, we are all of us more the creatures of circumstances than the pride of human nature is willing to allow. *Haud inexperta loquor.* I have known what it is to be cast upon a wide world without a friend or counsellor or opportunity to waste my capacity (such as it was) in idleness, my fortune in extravagance and my health in excess."[1]

It is certain that Randolph, when in Philadelphia, to some extent practised the vice of gambling.

"I have before me," Moncure D. Conway states in his work on Edmund Randolph, "an unpublished letter of St. George Tucker to this youth (18 Aug., 1791), enclosing $268 for his gambling debts and patiently adding: 'This I hope, my dear son, will be the last demand of the kind you will ever have to pay and I rely on your promise that it shall.'"[2]

Finally, however, we are happy to say, the only effect of this gambling catastrophe was to confirm the hatred of debt which the British encumbrance on Randolph's estate so early implanted in him. There is a winning mixture of pleasantry and grave self-reproach in an early letter from him to his stepfather, in which he touches upon this subject. After thanking St. George Tucker for a remittance, he says:

"I wish I could thank you also for your news concerning the conjectured 'marriage' between a reverend divine and one who has been long considered among the immaculate votaries of Diana. I can easily guess at the name of the former, but there are really so many ancient maids in your town of desperate

[1] Oct. 20, 1811, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 112. [2] P. 137.

expectations in the matrimonial lottery that it is no easy task to tell what person in particular comes under the above denomination. You may depend on my contracting no debts. I have known the sweets of that situation too well again to plunge into the same gulph of extreme misery."[1]

And we are reminded of Franklin and his whistle by what Randolph also had to say of debt in a retrospective letter to Theodore Dudley and Tudor.

"Enclosed," he wrote to them "are twenty dollars (five apiece besides ten for your journey) which may discharge any little debts that you may have contracted, although I hope you have not exposed yourselves to the inconvenience of any debt however small; but I know that this is an error into which youthful heedlessness is too apt to run. If you have escaped it, you have exercised more judgment than I possessed at your age; the want of which cost me many a heartache. When any bauble caught my fancy, I would perhaps buy it on credit and always for twice as much at least as it was worth. In a day or two, cloyed with the possession of what to my youthful imagination had appeared so very desirable, I would readily have given it away to the first comer, but, in discarding it, I could not exonerate myself from the debt which I had unwittingly incurred; the recollection of which incessantly haunted me. Many a night's sleep has been broken by sad reflection on the difficulty into which I had plunged myself and in devising means of extrication. At the approach of my creditor I shrunk and *looked* no doubt as meanly as I *felt;* for the relation between debtor and creditor is that of a slave to his master."[2]

What a pity it is, as Coleridge so finely says in his Table Talk, that human experience should be like the stern light of a ship that illuminates nothing but the track over which the ship has passed! It is to be hoped that the gambling debt, mentioned in the letter from St. George Tucker, was incurred before a letter from Randolph to Henry M. Rut-

[1] Phila., Jan. 26, 1794, Bouldin, 220.
[2] Oct. 6, 1807, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 35.

ledge was written, in which the writer, like many a contrite young fellow before him, moralizes the next morning as follows:

"After having led a life of dissipation for the last three months, I soon found that Ignorance and Vice were the unerring attendants of what is the surest road to Infamy and Guilt. It is impossible, my dear Henry, to conceive in what manner a life of debauchery destroys the finer feelings of the mind and repels those virtuous emotions which alone, as you have observed, render us superior to the brutes of the creation. Much farther might be said on a subject so worthy the attention of man and so intimately connected with his present and future welfare."[1]

When in Philadelphia, Randolph is said to have attended lectures on anatomy and physiology,[2] and traces of these lectures are observable, we think, in his speeches and writings (*a*). A favorite saying of his was that of the renowned Dr. Benjamin Rush, of Philadelphia, that calomel was the Samson of medicines.[3]

To the study of law, while he was at Philadelphia, Randolph evidently, as he himself admits in his letter to Tudor, paid very little attention. There is a flicker of interest in the subject in one of his letters to Henry M. Rutledge, written in his eighteenth year.[4] After informing Rutledge that a court of law was to determine whether he was to be a man of small or opulent fortune, he says that he had resolved to set himself above the reach of poverty by the acquirement of a lucrative profession, and had begun to prepare himself for entering on the study of the law by reading closely and with attention the authors that had been recommended to him. But the feebleness of the impulse is betrayed by the statement which immediately

[1] Feb. 24, 1791, *Pa. Hist. Soc.*
[2] Garland, v. 1, 60.
[3] July 21, 1811, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 93.
[4] Feb. 24, 1791, *Pa. Hist. Soc.*

follows: "If I am ever necessitated to pursue the practice of the law, I shall give it over as soon as I shall have acquired a sufficiency to support me genteelly in my native country." Some six years later, the force of the impulse was entirely spent, for, after telling Rutledge in a letter that he had been deprived by the sentence of the Federal Court of more than half of his fortune, though still not without a competence, he adds:

"I have but little thoughts of practicing law. You are not aware, my friend, when you express so warm a wish on that head, that the practice of the profession here requires among other things the talents of a postrider and bodily labor to which I feel myself unequal, or which at least I am unwilling to undertake."[1]

To realize how true this was, one has but to read the manuscript diary for the years 1791 and 1792, of Richard N. Venable, a lawyer of Pittsylvania County, Virginia, who was engaged in the perambulatory practice of the law in Pittsylvania, Halifax, Charlotte, Prince Edward, and other Southside Virginia counties. He could as well have dispensed with a copy of the Statutes of Virgina as with a horse, and his office was as often under the flaps of his saddle-bags as under a roof. But, even if Randolph had formed a stronger intention of studying and practicing law than he did, he might well have been discouraged by the extraordinary plan of study which Edmund Randolph prescribed for him. To have pursued it would have been not unlike taking such a long running start for the purpose of leaping over a fence as to be all out of breath when the fence is reached.

Hugh Blair Grigsby has given us a detailed and highly interesting description of Randolph's library,[2] and these comments made by Randolph on June 30, 1795, on the fly-

[1] Apr. 29, 1797, *Pa. Hist. Soc.*

[2] *South. Lit. Messenger*, v. 20, 79.

leaf of his Hume's *Treatise of Human Nature* are enough to assure us that he had as poor an opinion of Edmund Randolph as a teacher as he did of some of his other teachers. "I was," these remarks say, "sent to Philadelphia in the year 1790 to study *law* with the then Attorney General of the United States [Edmund Randolph]. This book was the first he put into my hands, telling me that he had planned a system of study for me and wished me to go through a course of metaphysical reasoning. After I returned the book, he gave me Shakespeare to read; then Beattie on *Truth*. After that Kames' *Elements of Criticism*, and fifthly Gillies' *History of Greece*. What an admirable system of study! What a complete course of metaphysics! *Risum teneatis?*"[1] (Can you restrain your laughter?) No, we must say, we cannot.

In one of his youthful letters to Rutledge, Randolph said: "I prefer a private to a public life: and domestic pleasures to the dazzling (tho. delusive) honors of public esteem."[2] Some five years later, he wrote to the same friend in these words:

"You enquire after my plans. I have none, my dear Henry. I exist in an obscurity from which I never shall emerge. You I hope to see in some of those important stations in your native country, for which your virtues and talents equally fit you. It is needless for me to urge the necessity which always exists in a Republic for her citizens to assist her with their wisdom and integrity. Let me hope to see you then amongst the foremost of our youth in the cause of liberty and man"[3];

which, at that time, of course, was the cause of the French Jacobins. This indifference to politics, and this acknowledgment of personal obscurity were not insincere or affected, for, contrary to the prevalent impression, the

[1] *South. Lit. Messenger*, v. 20, 79.
[2] Feb. 24, 1791, *Pa. Hist. Soc.*
[3] Dec. 28, 1795, *Pa. Hist. Soc.*

triumphant entrance of Randolph into public life was not due, as we shall presently see, simply to his own bold initiative and confident audacity. But he was, so to speak, a congenital politician, and all the circumstances, surrounding the period during which he was in New York and Philadelphia, before he attained his majority, tended to confirm his native predilection and fitness for political life (*a*). The manuscript reminiscences of Littleton Waller Tazewell, from which we have already quoted make this clear:

"After John Randolph left Virginia, as I have stated," he says, "I have no recollection of seeing or hearing of him until the year 1788. He then paid me a visit and spent some weeks with me at my father's house, during my college vacation. While we were then together, he informed me that, upon his return from Bermuda, he had been placed by his guardian at college in New York, and that he should soon proceed thither to resume his studies. I remember well that in his first letter, written after his arrival in New York, he stated that alien duties had been exacted by the custom-house there not only upon the vessel in which he had taken his passage, which was owned in Virginia, but upon the passengers on board of her, all of whom were natives of Virginia. This statement was accompanied by many reflexions designed to shew the impolicy of such exactions on the part of New York and the ill effects that would result from persisting in such a course. This incident must have occur'd before the adoption of the present Constitution of the United States. I have mention'd it merely to shew the precocious proclivity of John Randolph to the investigation of political subjects. He was not 16 years old at this time, I am very confident. I recollect also that another letter of his was confined to an account of the first inauguration of General Washington as President of the United States. This ceremony took place on the fourth of March, 1789, in the City of New York, where John Randolph then was, a witness of the scene. I regret the loss of this letter more than of any other. It contained a narrative of many

minute but very interesting incidents that do not appear in any of our public records or histories. This narrative, being written at the moment such incidents occur'd by an ingenuous youth, an eye witness of the events, had an air of freshness and truthfulness about it which was most captivating. As the letter related to nothing but matters of general interest, I showed it to my father, who was so much pleased with it that shortly afterwards he requested me to read it to a party of his friends who were dining with him that day. I well remember that the late Col. James Innes, the Attorney General, was one of this party. He was consider'd (justly I think) as the most eloquent speaker and best Belles-Lettres scholar then in Virginia. Col. Innes was so much pleased with the letter that he took it from me and read it over again and again, pronouncing it to be a model of such writing, and recommended to me to preserve the letter and to study its style."[1]

A remarkable achievement, indeed, was this for a lad of sixteen; but one that would make more impression upon the mind if attention were not diverted from it for a moment by astonishment that Tazewell could assign such a rank to Innes as a speaker, eloquent from all accounts as Innes was, when Patrick Henry, whose tribute to Innes makes him better known than anything that he himself ever said or did, was still alive (*a*). The only testimony that has come down to us from Randolph in regard to the inauguration of Washington is the well-known statement, which was made on the subject in one of his speeches to his constituents: "I saw Washington," he said, "but could not hear him take the oath to support the Federal Constitution. The Constitution was in its chrysalis state. I saw what Washington did not see; but two other men in Virginia saw it—George Mason and Patrick Henry—the *poison under its wings*."[2] The loss of the letter about the inauguration of Washington is too stale for us to shed many tears over it now, but we are lucky enough to be able to offer our read-

[1] Mrs. Gilbert S. Meem MSS. [2] Garland, v. 1, 28.

ers a modest substitute for it in the form of a letter in which Randolph describes the joy and hubbub in the City of New York, at the time a town of about 33,000 inhabitants, over the adoption of the Federal Constitution:

"NEW YORK, July 30th, 1788.

"You have doubtless, my ever dear and affectionate Papa, received Accounts of the Adoption of the new Constitution by the State of New York; the majority consisting of five only. On Wednesday 26th inst. (4 days previous to our hearing of the ratification of this State), there was a very grand Procession in this city (on account of its being received by ten States) which proceeded from the plain before Bridewell down Broadway thro' Wall Street; and, by the way of Great Queen Street, proceeded to the Federal Green before Bunker's Hill, where there were tables set for more than five thousand people to Dine. Two Oxen were roasted whole and several cows and Sheep. I'll assure [you], my dear Sir, it put me in mind of the great Preparations which were made in Don Quixote for the wedding of Camacho and the rich and the fair Quiteria. There were ten tables set out to represent the ten States which had acceded to the Constitution; all which were concentered together at one end, like the sticks of a Fan; where they joined were seated all the Congress with the President in the middle. The Procession was very beautiful and well conducted. Every trade and profession had a Colour emblematical of it. The chief of the Bakers were drawn on a stage, on which they were seen mixing their bread; the apprentices, all in white, followed with ready-baked Cakes. The Coopers followed, making barrels, and the apprentices followed with a keg under the arm of each. Next came the Brewers, bringing hogsheads of beer along with a little Bacchus astride a Cask, holding a large Goblet in his hand. It would require too much time for me to tell you of all the different occupations, but, to the honor of New York, be it spoken that, among 8000 people, who were said to have dined together on the green, there was not a single Drunken Man or fight to be seen. On Saturday, the 27th Inst., news arrived of the Constitution's being adopted. A party of *Federalists*, as they call themselves, went to the house

of Mr. Greenleaf, printer of the *Patriotic Register*, and, after having broken his windows and thrown away his Types (much to their discredit), went to the Governor's, where they gave three hisses, and beat the rogue's march around the house. They proceeded to the houses of the Federals (as they call them) and gave three cheers."[1]

We need not go further than the correspondence between Randolph and his stepfather to ascertain how keen and vigilant the former's interest in politics was during the last year that he was in Philadelphia. On Jan. 26, 1794, he wrote to St. George Tucker as follows:

"Mr. Madison's resolutions respecting the restrictions of commerce in regard to those nations not in alliance with us are now before the House of Representatives, and will be, I am afraid, thrown out from the circumstance of two of our Southern men being absent; Mr. Page and Mercer. It is an unpardonable thing for men to offer themselves as candidates who cannot punctually attend."[2]

Four days later, he had worked himself up into such a tense condition of mind over the tardiness of some of the Southern representatives in taking their seats that he wrote to his stepfather in these words:

"The House has come as yet to no determination respecting Mr. Madison's resolutions. They will not pass; thanks to our absent delegates; nay, were they to go through the House of Representatives, the Senate would reject them, as there is *no Senator* from Maryland and but one from Georgia. Thus are the interests of the Southern states basely betrayed by the indolence of some and the villainy of others of her statesmen; Messrs. G——r, H——n, and L——e generally voting with the paper men."[3]

A few weeks later, he communicates to St. George Tucker the yeas and nays by which the eligibility of Gallatin to a

[1] N. Y. Pub. Lib. [2] Bouldin, 221. [3] *Id.*, 222.

seat in the Senate had been decided adversely to him. Then follow these observations, showing how deeply the interest of the fledgling politician was enlisted in the question:

"The Republican party are much hurt at this decision since in abilities and principles he (Gallatin) was inferior to none in that body. So said Mr. Taylor from Virginia. Altho' he came here in 1780, took up arms in our defence, bought lands and settled, yet, 9 years not having elapsed between the time of his taking the oaths of allegiance and his election, he was declared not qualified according to the Constitution. It was agreed that by Art. 2, Sect. 1, clause 4, a resident of 14 years' standing might take the oaths of citizenship one day and be elected the next to the Presidential chair; and, therefore, it was apprehended that the Constitution of the United States was not more vigilant with respect to the election of Senators than Presidents. Certainly, if a man be not a citizen of the United States at the time of the adoption of the Federal Constitution, he is not eligible to the office of President. However, Mr. Gallatin had been 9 years a *citizen* and 13 years an inhabitant, when he took his seat. Query: Can a man be a Senator until he qualifies as is prescribed by Art. 6, clause 3, and . . . by C.1, 2d Sess: 1st Congress? I wish you would inform me what your opinion is on the subject."[1]

The personal influences, by which Randolph's political opinions were moulded, were exclusively anti-Federalist, and were of such an extraordinary stamp as to indoctrinate him from the very beginning with an extreme jealousy of Federal authority, and an immutable fealty to the dogma of state sovereignty. "You know I was an Anti-Federalist when hardly breeched," he wrote on one occasion to Josiah Quincy.[2] Among the members of the Virginia Convention of 1788, was Randolph's uncle, Col. Theodorick Bland, who was a steadfast opponent of the

[1] Phila., Mar. 1, 1794, Bouldin, 223.
[2] Oct. 18, 1813, *Life of Quincy*, 337.

ratification by that Convention of the Federal Constitution. He was also a member of the first Congress under the Federal Constitution, which, springing into existence, ere our sickly national youth had yet attained a beard, was not able to secure a quorum for weeks after the time appointed for its organization by the Constitution. The political bias of Colonel Bland was also that of Thomas Tudor Tucker, the brother of St. George Tucker, and likewise a member of the First Congress. For him, Randolph seems to have always entertained feelings of the profoundest respect and affection. "I have received a long, long letter from that best of men, Dr. Tucker," he wrote on one occasion to his stepfather. "And such a letter! I declare to you, my dear father, that I am unable to describe the veneration and love in which I hold that unequalled man."[1]

When the first congress opened, the only two members present from the South were Alexander White, from Virginia, and this gentleman from South Carolina. The sole reason why Patrick Henry was not a member of the first Senate of the United States was because, with that utter indifference to the most exalted offices, which he exhibited in the latter part of his life, he did not care to be; but he was at pains to see to it that the first two members of the Federal Senate from Virginia were anti-Federalist in their leanings, William Grayson and Richard Henry Lee. Indeed, a majority of all of the members of both houses of the first Congress from Virginia were adherents of Patrick Henry and George Mason,[2] and shared the views about the consolidating tendencies of the Federal Constitution to which those two men had given such powerful expression in the Virginia Convention of 1788. St. George Tucker, too, to whom Randolph remained passionately attached until about the year 1805, was a State-Rights partisan of the straitest sect. Among Randolph's companions, while

[1] Dec. 30, — Lucas MSS.
[2] Garland, v. 1, 40.

he was in Philadelphia, were John W. Eppes, who was afterwards to become one of Jefferson's sons-in-law, a conspicuous member of Congress, and the only antagonist who was ever able to deprive Randolph of his seat in the House of Representatives even for a brief season; Thomas Marshall, the brother of the Chief Justice, and Robert Rose, who subsequently married the sister of James Madison[1]; and it can hardly be questioned that Randolph and these associates of his, scions as they all were of good Virginia stocks, must, in a town of only some twenty-eight thousand inhabitants, as Philadelphia then was, have been brought into familiar contact with the leading anti-Federalist members of Congress from Virginia. An indication of the intimate intercourse that we can fairly infer Randolph to have had at this time with prominent members of Congress is to be found in a letter, written by him from New York to St. George Tucker, in which he states that Theodorick and himself were under very great obligations to the President of Congress, who, on learning from Col. Carrington who they were, had sent them an invitation each week to dine with him. The same letter acknowledges similar obligations to "Mr. Grason," and it assures St. George Tucker that such attentions are "a very acceptable thing to college boys."[2] And so they are, as many a fresh young heart and eager appetite have testified since that day. While in New York and Philadelphia, Randolph was drawn back to Virginia, as the letter to Tudor narrates, in 1788, 1790, and 1792; and a letter from him to his Bermuda friend, Jack, also discloses the fact that he was in Virginia in 1789; for, in that letter, he writes to Jack from Williamsburg that, since his last letter, he had been to a thousand different places, and had traveled almost as many miles.

'I am so jaded with riding all over the country," he continues, "that I have a great mind not to finish my letter, and

[1] Garland, v. 1, 59. [2] July 30, 1788, N. Y. Pub. Libr.

I have a very great tremor in my hands occasioned by too violent exercise. The pleasure I have enjoyed since my arrival in Virginia has been great indeed." "However," the letter adds regretfully, "I shall have to retrace the 450 miles back to New York in a very few days."[1]

Horse and man were already coalescing into the centaur that they afterwards became.

In a letter to his niece, Randolph once said:

"I have seen such dreadful consequences ensue from the indulgence of a propensity to satire by women that I never discern the slightest propensity towards it in a female without shuddering. This vice, aggravated by long habit, and seeking something poignant, that might excite jaded appetites, consigned my most amiable and unfortunate brother to a dungeon, and might have dragged him to a gibbet, blasted the fair promise of his youth, and rendered an untimely death a welcome and happy release from a blighted reputation. My dear child, when I look back upon the past, the eventful history of my race and name (now fast verging towards extinction) presents a tragedy that far outstrips in improbability and rivals in horrour all dramatic or romantic fiction."[2]

The brother that Randolph had in mind, when penning these words, was Richard Randolph; but the circumstances, which led him to link up a propensity to satire with the downfall of Richard, are unknown to us. All we know of Richard, aside from the catastrophe alluded to by Randolph, is of a nature to inspire us with marked respect for both his character and intellect. The tendency of the human mind to find in some obscure brother, or other contemporary of a distinguished man, mental powers, superior to his, asserted itself quite noticeably in Richard's case; but, even after this fringe of exaggeration has been pushed aside, enough still remains to assure us that he was

[1] June 30, 1789, N. Y. Pub. Libr.
[2] Mar. 12, 1824, Dr. R. B. Carmichael MSS.

distinctly endowed with far more than ordinary parts. In the letter to the *Richmond Enquirer*, in which Henry St. George Tucker, a man who was too long an eminent judge to indulge in fulsome praise even in regard to a brother, defended the reputation of his father from the attack made upon it in one of John Randolph's wills, he says of Richard: "He was four years elder than John, was bred to the bar and equally distinguished for his manly and decisive character, for his generous and noble and affectionate temper, for his commanding and extraordinary talents and for his extensive and useful acquirements."[1] And the writer might have added for his susceptibility to romantic affection and kindling enthusiasm. He had an even more liberal share of fastidious purism than that which helped to arrest the full development of John Randolph as a successful politician; and the high-flown sentimental cast of his character emerges very prominently in his letters to Judge Tucker:

"Accept once more, my beloved father," he wrote on one occasion, "the warmest effusions of a heart that knows but one tie superior to that which binds him to the best of parental friends. When I look back to those times wherein I was occupied in forming my mind for the reception of professional knowledge, and, indeed, to whatever period of my life I cast my eyes, something presents itself to remind me of the source whence sprung all my present advantages and happiness. Something continually shows my father to me in the double light of parent and friend. While I recognize all the attention I have received from him, all the precepts inculcated by him; while I feel that, if I have any virtuous emotions or pleasures, they are all derived from him, that to him I owe whatever capacity I possess of being useful in the world I am in, while all these reflections are crowding into my mind, I feel a sensation that all are strangers to who have not known such a friend. The feelings, which arise from a sense of gratitude for

[1] Sept. 10, 18[illegible].

the kindness and friendship of my father, the tender affection, inspired by his virtues and his love, are as delightful to my soul as the knowledge of being obliged by those we despise is painful and oppressive."[1]

And in these sentences Richard rises to an even higher level of affection:

"The time is now at hand when I hope you will be relieved from all further anxiety and the embarrassments you have too long endured in the management of our patrimony; when my brother and myself will take on ourselves our own troubles, and when the end of your administration of our little affairs will furnish the world with one complete and perhaps solitary example, shall I only say, of an unerring guardian of infant education and property? An example, I glory in boasting it, of an adopted father, surpassing in parental affection and unremitted attention to his adopted children all the real fathers who are known to any one. I can most sincerely and truly declare that, in no one moment of my whole life, have I ever felt the loss in the least trifle."[2]

With respect to a simple contract debt which was not technically binding at that time under the laws of Virginia upon the lands devised by the elder John Randolph to his sons, Richard wrote to Judge Tucker these unselfish words:

"I urge the propriety, indeed, necessity of paying the open account which my mother always said was recognized by my father as a true one, and ought therefore honestly to be discharged. For myself, I can never bear the idea of a just debt, due from my father to any one, remaining unsatisfied, while I have property of his; firmly convinced as I am that he had no equitable right, whatever power the law may have given him, of devising me land or anything else to the loss of any of his just creditors, and that, under this conviction, it will be equally iniquitous in me to retain such property; suffering these just claims to pass unnoticed."[3]

[1] Garland, v. 1, 61. [2] *Id.*, 62. [3] *Ibid.*

But it is as an *ami des noirs*, a zealot in the cause of emancipation, that Richard Randolph gave the best-known proof of his disinterestedness of character. By his will, he provided for the manumission of all his negroes; some two hundred in number, and for the distribution by his wife between the heads of families among them, in proportion to the number of their children and their respective merits, of four hundred acres of land. The preamble, by which these provisions are preceded, foams like the lips of a Pythoness with an abomination of slavery that mounts up almost to a sort of ecstasy:

"To make retribution, as far as I am able, to an unfortunate race of bondmen, over whom my ancestors have usurped and exercised the most lawless and monstrous tyranny, and in whom my countrymen (by their iniquitous laws, in contradiction of their own declaration of rights, and in violation of every sacred law of nature; of the inherent, inalienable and imprescriptible rights of man, and of every principle of moral and political honesty) have vested me with absolute property; to express my abhorrence of the theory as well as infamous practice of usurping the rights of our fellow creatures, equally entitled with ourselves to the enjoyment of liberty and happiness; to exculpate myself to those, who may perchance think or hear of me after death, from the black crime which might otherwise be imputed to me of voluntarily holding the above mentioned miserable beings in the same state of abject slavery in which I found them on receiving my patrimony at lawful age; to impress my children with just horror at a crime so enormous and indelible; to conjure them, in the last words of a fond father, never to participate in it in any the remotest degree, however sanctioned by laws (framed by the tyrants themselves who oppress them), or supported by false reasoning; used always to veil the sordid views of avarice and the lust of power; to declare to them and to the world that nothing but uncontrollable necessity, forced on me by my father (who wrongfully bound over them to satisfy the rapacious creditors of a brother who, for this purpose, which he falsely believed to

be generous, mortgaged all his slaves to British harpies for money to gratify pride and pamper sensuality; by which mortgage, the said slaves being bound, I could not exercise the right of ownership necessary to their emancipation, and, being obliged to keep them on my land, was driven reluctantly to violate them in a great degree) (though I trust far less than others have done) in order to maintain them . . . ; for the aforesaid purposes and, with an indignation, too great for utterance, at the tyrants of the earth, from the throned despot of a whole nation to the most despicable, but not less infamous, petty tormentors of single wretched slaves, whose torture constitutes his wealth and enjoyment, I do hereby declare that it is my will and desire, nay most anxious wish that my negroes, all of them, be liberated, and I do declare them by this writing free and emancipated to all intents and purposes whatsoever."[1]

No abolitionist that we can recall, in urging the emancipation of other people's negroes, ever pronounced a more withering anathema upon the institution of slavery than this testator did in freeing his own. Nor was this all. Having glutted his indignation in that long and involved series of denunciatory recitals, he adds that he humbly begs the forgiveness of his slaves for the manifold injuries that he had too often inhumanly, unjustly, and mercilessly inflicted on them. By the succeeding provisions of the will, Richard devised and bequeathed his entire estate to his wife Judith, and made her his executrix, but he further provided that, if she did not survive him, he appointed, as his executors, his "father-in-law," St. George Tucker, his brother, John Randolph, his friends, Ryland Randolph, Brett Randolph, Creed Taylor, John Thompson, Alexander Campbell, Daniel Call, "and the most virtuous and incorruptible of mankind, and (next to my father-in-law) my greatest benefactor, George Wythe, Chancellor of Virginia, the brightest ornament of human nature."

After Richard's death, the free negro settlement, con-

[1] *Will Book for 1797*, Clerk's Office, Prince Edward Co., Va.

templated by his will—Israel Hill it was called—was duly established; but it became, for the most part, a mere nest of *lazzaroni*,[1] and, during the great sectional debate over slavery, was frequently pointed to by pro-slavery extremists as an example of the impolicy of emancipation. Self-governing negro commonwealths, like Hayti and Liberia, to be sure, have made very little of themselves, but the failure, before the Civil War, of a community of liberated Virginian blacks, no longer subject to the same corporeal and moral discipline as slaves, and yet still subject to some of the worst disabilities of the slave status, to acquire a creditable standing in point of thrift and morality should not be charged up too hastily to native short-comings.

Such was the man whose reputation in 1792, some three years before his will was executed, became enmeshed in one of the most distressing scandals that has ever been known in the history of Virginia—a scandal which was all the more painful because of the singularly high standard of female chastity, apart from the commerce of lewd white men and negro women, which was common enough, that prevailed during the existence of slavery in Southside Virginia. If social intercourse between the sexes there was exceptionally easy and cordial, and attended by an unusual amount of gallantry and coquetry, it was because minor relaxations of formality could be safely tolerated where fundamental reservations in regard to female honor were guarded by such relentless principles of private retribution.

For some time prior to 1792, Ann Cary Randolph, better known as Nancy Randolph, had been living with her sister, Judith Randolph, the cousin and wife of Richard Randolph, in the latter's home at Bizarre.[2] Judith and Nancy were the daughters of Thomas Mann Randolph, of Tucka-

[1] *The Old Virginia Gentleman and Other Sketches*, by Geo. W. Bagby (1910), 100.

[2] Garland, v. 1, 63.

hoe, in Goochland County, Virginia, who was a descendant of the original William Randolph, of Turkey Island, through his son, Thomas[1]; and, to escape family discord, for which we have no reason to believe that she had been responsible, Nancy had been compelled to leave her father's house.[2]

On Monday, Oct. 1, 1792, Richard and Judith Randolph, Nancy, a Mrs. John Randolph, and a Mr. Archibald Randolph, one of Nancy's lovers, arrived at the home of Randolph Harrison, Glenlyvar, in Cumberland County, before dinner. They came as his guests. Soon after dinner, Nancy, who before it had already complained of being very unwell, went upstairs to her room and did not come down again that day. The second floor of the house, on which her room was, contained two rooms, an outer room connecting directly with the staircase, which led up to it, and an inner room, communicating with the staircase only through the outer room. The inner room was the one to which Nancy repaired after dinner, and that night the outer room was occupied by Richard Randolph and his wife. At a late hour in the night, Randolph Harrison and his wife, who were sleeping on the floor below, were awakened by loud screams, which they thought at first were Judith's but which, as they were presently told, were really Nancy's. These screams were followed by an application to the Harrisons for laudanum, which was sent, and Mrs. Harrison then ascended to the outer room and found Judith sitting up in bed. She was asked by Mrs. Harrison what was the matter with Nancy, and replied that she did not know, but conjectured that she was suffering from an attack of hysterics to which she was subject. An attack of colic, Judith thought, could hardly

[1] Garland, v. 1, 61.

[2] John Marshall's notes on evidence in Richard Randolph trial, *Va. Hist. Soc.*; Letter from Tho. Jefferson to Martha Randolph, July 17, 1790. *Life of T. J.*, by Randall, v. 1, 625.

make her scream so. After receiving this statement, Mrs. Harrison went to the door between the two rooms with a lighted candle in her hand, but found it fastened by a bolt. This, however, she reflected was because the spring-catch on it was broken, and it could only be kept shut by being bolted. She knocked and the door was instantly opened, but she was immediately asked by both Richard Randolph and Nancy, when the candle shone on Nancy's eyes, not to bring it into the room as Nancy had been taking laudanum, was in great pain, and could not bear the light from it. Mrs. Harrison then put the candle down outside the door, and entered the room, where, in addition to Richard Randolph and Nancy, were a negro girl of about fifteen years of age and a child of about seven years of age named Virginia. Here she remained for some time in conversation until Nancy had become easier, when she excused herself on the plea that a sick child of hers required her attention, and returned to her own room downstairs. She and her husband then went to bed again, but afterwards, while not completely awake or, if fully awake, not very attentive, heard some person come downstairs whom they supposed to be Richard Randolph from the weight of his steps on the stairway, and in a short time heard the same person (as they supposed) return upstairs. They thought that Richard had come down to send for a physician for Nancy.

But why pursue the wretched story from this point in such minute detail? It is sufficient to say that the next day Mrs. Harrison noted bloodstains on the stairs, leading up to the second floor of the house, and on the pillow-case on the bed where Nancy still lay with the blankets drawn closely around her. But even then Mrs. Harrison did not suspect the truth until a negro woman told her that Nancy had had a miscarriage; and later, after the bed had been vacated, she noted stains on its mattress too, along with indications of an effort to wash them out. Some days after Nancy took to her bed, a report came to the ears of Ran-

dolph Harrison from the negroes about Glenlyvar that a fœtus had been deposited on a pile of shingles between two logs, and some six or seven weeks later he observed a place answering the description with a shingle on it, which appeared to have been stained.

Among the most salient facts of the case were those which bear upon the deportment of the three principal figures in this squalid tragedy at or about the time of its occurrence. So far as the testimony of persons outside of the Bizarre household went, unbroken harmony had existed between its members before the arrival of the party from Bizarre at Glenlyvar. When Mrs. Harrison went upstairs to the second floor at her home, she did not observe in Judith the alarm and confusion which was to be expected, if Judith had supposed that her sister was about to be delivered of a child, or the resentment which would naturally spring up in her mind from suspecting that her husband was its father. Judith only appeared uneasy over Nancy's illness. Nancy's behavior after the event, so long as she was at Glenlyvar, remained the same as usual. At the end of the week, she, Richard, and Judith returned to Bizarre, and she immediately resumed her habit of riding on horseback. When Mr. and Mrs. Randolph Harrison visited Bizarre, about three weeks after the departure of Richard, Judith, and Nancy from Glenlyvar, the behavior of Richard and Judith to each other was, Randolph Harrison thought, not different from what it ordinarily was, except that he conceived Richard to be somewhat crusty. To Mrs. Harrison there appeared to be entire harmony between the two. Another Mrs. Harrison, who saw Judith just before she left Glenlyvar, stated that she had never seen a more cheerful countenance. Pride of character, dexterous management on the whole, and absolutely perfect self-possession, but for the screams extorted from Nancy by intolerable pain, shaped the entire conduct of that remarkable trio, who thus found

themselves suddenly confronted, in the home of one of the most conspicuous gentlemen and landowners of Cumberland County, by one of the most fearful emergencies which it is possible for the human mind to imagine; but this assumes, of course, that Judith Randolph was cognizant of what was going on in the inner room and of what was taken downstairs. But this she repeatedly and positively denied.

What had happened at Glenlyvar was soon, naturally enough, carried far and wide by the tongue of rumor, and the final result was that, at a court held for Cumberland County on the 29th day of April, 1793, Richard Randolph, who had been refused bail and stood committed, and charged with feloniously murdering a child, said to be born of Nancy Randolph (we are quoting the words of the court minutes), was brought to the bar of the court in the custody of the sheriff and there denied the fact before the following "Gentlemen Justices," by whom he was examined: Mayo Carrington, Thomas Nash, William Macon, Nelson Patterson, John Holman, Ben Allen, Joseph Carrington, Henry Skipwith, Joseph Michaux, Anderson Cocke, Cary Harrison, Walter Warfield, Benjamin Wilson, Codrington Carrington, Archer Allen and Nathaniel Carrington.[1] (*a*) Any Virginian, familiar with the social standing of these individuals, drawn for the most part at any rate, as Virginia Magistrates then generally were, from the ranks of the landed aristocracy, and recollecting that the lives of two Randolphs were involved in this examination, might well be reminded of the person who said of a certain high-bred individual that he felt sure that God would think twice before damning one of that quality. To these sixteen Magistrates the facts that we have stated were duly presented, and there was a considerable amount of testimony besides to show that more than one sharp-sighted

[1] Commonwealth *v.* Rich'd Randolph, Clk's office, Cumberland C. H., Va.

eye had observed, before the visit to Glenlyvar, that Richard Randolph was indulging in fond familiarities with Nancy that even the natural, heartfelt manners of Southside Virginia could not ignore, and that she was manifestly *enceinte*. But much of this testimony is of too prurient a nature to bear repetition in this place. Among the witnesses, pathetically enough, was Archibald Randolph, who testified that for some 18 months he had suspected that Richard Randolph and Nancy were too fond of each other, but that he had afterwards entirely relinquished this suspicion; and Peyton Harrison, who testified that, upon being told by a servant that there had been a miscarriage at Glenlyvar, he had felt bound by his friendship for Archibald Randolph to inform him of it. Peyton Harrison was followed by John Randolph, the subject of this work, who testified that his deceased brother, Theodorick, had imparted to him in Philadelphia the fact that he was engaged to Nancy; that he was at Bizarre for sometime before the pending examination, and had been informed by Richard and Judith that Nancy was in low spirits because of Theodorick's death, and that he must not mention him to her, but that he had once mentioned him, and that she had burst into tears. Theodorick died on February 14, 1792,[1] and the significance of these statements will become more patent hereafter when we reproduce in a later chapter of this book the extraordinary correspondence on the subject of the Glenlyvar incident between John Randolph and Nancy, which took place in 1814–1815. John Randolph also testified that the most perfect harmony existed in the Bizarre family circle, and that he had noted how much fonder Judith was of Nancy than of any of her other relations. But Richard Randolph could not be put upon the stand because he was himself the accused; nor could Nancy because she was not bound to incriminate herself; no negro who knew anything about the

[1] Bryan MSS.

miscarriage or saw the birth at the woodpile was competent, under the existing laws of Virginia, to testify at all[1]; and Randolph Harrison, when he was told of the birth having been seen there, was too good a friend of the Bizarre household, and too cautious a man, to take any prompt steps to verify the statement. In other words, there was nothing to connect the screams in the inner room at Glenlyvar, or the steps on the stairway leading down from it, with the bloody object which had been deposited at the woodpile. Besides, there was no evidence to show that there had ever been a living child at all. Consequently there was nothing for the sixteen Magistrates to do except to find Richard not guilty of the felony wherewith he stood charged and to dismiss him from custody.

Patrick Henry, John Marshall (afterwards Chief Justice of the United States), and Alexander Campbell were Richard Randolph's advocates at the trial.[2] The eloquence of Henry! the logic of Marshall! not often have there been such yoke-mates. And Alexander Campbell too, who was the same Campbell, that was contingently appointed by Richard to be one of his executors, was also a leading lawyer of his time in Virginia. William Wirt Henry, the able and scholarly grandson of Patrick Henry and his biographer, is our authority for the statement that, when a messenger first came to Patrick Henry, who was then residing on the Staunton River, at Long Island, in Campbell County, from Richard Randolph, at the time a prisoner in the Cumberland County jail, and delivered to him a letter from Richard offering him a fee of 250 guineas to defend him, Henry declined the fee, being unwell and averse to taking the long journey from Long Island to Cumberland Court House; but that, when the messenger returned some days later with the offer of a fee of 500 guineas, he accepted the employment, after consulting

[1] *Hist. of Slavery in Va.*, by Jas. C. Ballagh, 73.
[2] *Patrick Henry*, by W. W. Henry, v. 2, 491.

with his wife Dolly.[1] In connection with Mrs. Carter Page, one of the witnesses in the case and the daughter of Col. Archibald Cary, the Speaker of the Virginia Senate, who, in 1776, had threatened to plant his dagger in Henry's heart, should he accept the office of Dictator, the same biographer recalls an incident which quite pointedly illustrates the dramatic quality of an orator who, perhaps, has to his credit as vivid a mass of contemporary panegyrics as any orator that has ever lived; Demosthenes, Cicero, Chatham, and Mirabeau not excepted.

"Mr. Henry," William Wirt Henry says, "saw the necessity of breaking down her testimony, and soon found an opportunity of doing so. The witness testified that her suspicions had been aroused concerning the lady involved, and, being on one occasion in the house with her, she had attempted to satisfy her curiosity by peeping through a crack in the door of the lady's chamber while she was undressing. Mr. Henry at once resorted to his inimitable power of exciting ridicule by the tones of his voice, and, in a manner which convulsed the audience, asked her: 'Which eye did you peep with?' The laughter in the court room aroused the anger of the witness, which was excited to the highest pitch, when Mr. Henry turned to the court and exclaimed in his most effective manner: 'Great God, deliver us from eavesdroppers!'"[2]

That there should be no report extant beyond the court minutes, still of record at Cumberland Court House, of the proceedings at the trial of Richard Randolph is a matter for regret, or it may be for gratification. Copious notes, however, of the evidence adduced in the case were drawn up by John Marshall, and copied by John Randolph, and it is upon these notes and the court minutes that the above narrative is mainly based; for the most part upon their very words. The notes were dated Williamsburg, June 28, 1793, and their concluding sentences demonstrate

[1] *Patrick Henry*, by Henry, v. 2, 491.

[2] *Id.*, 492.

that, as late as that day, the fact was still not entirely established that Nancy had been delivered of a child, or an abortion, on the fateful night of Oct. 1, 1792. They read as follows:

"The friends of Miss Randolph cannot deny that there is some foundation on which suspicion may build; nor can it be denied by her [Nancy's] enemies but that every circumstance may be accounted for without imputing guilt to her. In this situation, candor will not condemn, or exclude from society, a person who may be only unfortunate."[1]

At a later day, as we shall see, the fact that there had been a birth or miscarriage at Glenlyvar *was* established. But it was quite a long time before the matter passed into the domain of certainty, and this fact must be duly taken into consideration by the reader as we go on.

Contrary to the impression that we should otherwise entertain, Marshall's notes distinctly state that Nancy too was tried before the Magistrates. They also state that at her trial Judith Randolph deposed that she was kept awake the whole night by Nancy's illness; that, excessively fatigued, and feeling unwell, she had, but a short time before Mrs. Harrison came up to the second floor, aroused her husband, and requested him to go into Nancy's room and drop some laudanum for her; that he at first expressed some reluctance, saying that Nancy had the hysterics and would soon be easy, but that on a repetition of her request he got up and, without putting on his coat, went into the inner room; that a child could not have been born or been carried out of the inner room without her knowledge; that she was confident that no such event happened, and that Richard did not go down stairs until after daybreak. This testimony upon the part of Judith coincides substantially with statements which she had

[1] Notes of John Marshall on evidence in Richard Randolph Trial, *Va. Hist. Soc.*

previously made in a letter to St. George Tucker, dated Matoax, April 21, 1793, that she had written at his instance without the knowledge of her husband and sent to St. George Tucker by the hand of John Randolph, in the vain hope that it might put an end to the ugly rumors about Richard then abroad. The letter was given to the public by Tucker, accompanied by a communication from himself, dated May 5, 1793, in which he declared that Judith's conduct to her sister and her husband during the eight weeks, which they had spent together under his roof, in the months of January, February, and March, 1793, had been sufficient to have convinced the most hardened skeptic in the universe that the letter, and another of minor importance from Judith to her sister, Eliza Pleasants, which was given to the public along with it, contained the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.[1] In the letter to Tucker, after stating that the circumstances surrounding the visit to Glenlyvar had made no impression upon her mind at the time, and had entirely escaped her memory, and that Nancy's illness had appeared to her only a trifling complaint of the stomach, Judith expressly asserts that there was no way of issuing from Nancy's room at Glenlyvar without passing immediately by her [Judith's] bed, and that what was said to have happened at Glenlyvar could not possibly have taken place without her knowledge, as the two rooms were so situated that the most trifling noise in one could be distinctly heard in the other. The letter also asserts that, aside from things which were remembered but for a few moments, the most perfect cordiality had ever subsisted between Nancy and herself, and that nothing had ever passed between Nancy and Richard that could have created suspicion in the most jealous mind. Richard, too, had a word to say before the trial, which, so far as we know, is the only written statement that he ever made

[1] Bryan MSS.

relating to the subject. We refer to a letter from him to St. George Tucker, dated Tuckahoe, March 14, 1793, which makes manifest the extent to which the affair at Glenlyvar had become the subject of general discussion, the bitterness of feeling which it had stirred up in the Randolph connection, and the state of almost frantic misery to which it had reduced Richard Randolph:

"You will no doubt, my ever dear Father, be much astonished when I tell you that, by the time you receive this, I shall be far on my return to Williamsburg; and you will be yet more surprised at hearing that I mean to spend the summer in one of the Northern States. Since I saw you, I have been informed that the late horrid and malicious lie, which has been for some time too freely circulated, has been, by the diligent exertion of those timid enemies (whom I have not been able by *any insult* to force to an interview) so impressed, during my absence, on the minds of every one, that a public enquiry into it is now *more* than *ever* necessary. Having endeavored, by every method I could devise, to bring William Randolph [one of Nancy's brothers] to a personal explanation of his conduct, and to give me personal satisfaction for his aspersions of my character, and finding that no insult is sufficient to rouse his feelings (if he has any), I have at last urged Col. Tom to bring an action of slander against him. This will bring the whole affair once more before the eyes of every one, the circumstances, from beginning to end, of the persons accusing and accused will be seen at once, and the villainy of my traducers fully exposed. When this is done, I shall once more know the blessing of a tranquil mind! . . .

"The reasons for my determining to spend the summer to the north are as follows. In the first place, my feelings would be so continually wounded, during the time taken up in such an enquiry, by seeing no one whose mind was not impressed unfavorably towards me that I would not support it silently. Again, Nancy's situation would be yet worse than mine from the same causes, on account of the delicacy of her sex and sentiments. For this reason, she will go with us, and, while the

most important enquiry that could take place is going on, we shall be out of the way of that observation, which could do nothing but wound our feelings! But what weighs with me more than all is the situation of my beloved wife! When she left Williamsburg, she had extracted from me a promise not to say anything more, or make any further enquiry into the abominable story . . . To satisfy her mind, I made the promise, hoping that, when I arrived here, I should find that the force of truth and a conduct on our part, dictated by conscious innocence, had prevailed over the dark and little calumnies of cowardly enemies. The reverse being the case, I am obliged to go on with the enquiry, and that in the most public manner. It would be impossible for me to avoid innumerable broils, were I to stay in Virginia. My mind has been so exasperated by the villainous conduct I have met with that I know not what I might do in a moment of passion; perhaps what might embitter every moment of my future life; *probably* what would be *fatal* to my beloved wife in her *present* situation! I cannot answer for myself, if I remain in this scene of villainy and base atrocious calumny. I therefore avoid it. When I see you, my beloved Father, I will speak more fully and unburden a heart loaded with the basest injuries! The share of the crop of the lower plantation now due to me will enable me to effect my purpose, and I will thank you either to sell so much of it, or, if you prefer keeping it together, to raise the probable amount of it on the credit of the tobacco.

"You will see us in a short time; at farthest the day after your rect. of this. Our joint loves to all the family. Assure my dear Mrs. Tucker how more than ever we feel ourselves bound to her. Adieu my most tenderly beloved father, and do not give yourself uneasiness on my account, as I hope soon to be redressed and at peace! Yours most filially affect.

"RD. RANDOLPH."[1]

In a letter written to John Randolph in 1815, Nancy stated that when the verdict of the Magistrates, at the close of the Richard Randolph trial, was announced, it was greeted with shouts of exultation by the audience in

[1] *Va. Hist. Soc.*

the court room. If so, the shouts indicated a radically different state of public opinion from that which had previously existed in Cumberland County and is so poignantly reflected in this letter.

If it is true that before the Glenlyvar mishap nothing beyond a passing tiff had disturbed the sisterly intercourse between Nancy and Judith, this could not be said after the trial. Upon that point we have some testimony in the Diary of John Randolph in the form of a memorandum in regard to his movements in 1792 and 1793, after he had recovered from his attack of scarlet fever at Richmond:

"To Bizarre in August via Richmond, Tuckahoe, Manakin Town Ferry, Powhatan Court House and Green Creek, where I slept from Tuckahoe; to Carter Page's and Randolph Harrison's (Glenlyvar) for the first time. *Great frost October 1st.* In October by Hors du Monde (Watkins'), Bevils Bridge, Petersburg and Brandon to Williamsburg. *Banister gives me the first intelligence of what was alleged to have happened at Glenlyvar.* My brother and family come to Williamsburg. I go up with them to Matoax by Otway Byrd's. To Cumberland Court House on Star; return the same night; accompany Judy and Nancy with R. M. Banister in Mrs. Shore's carriage. The trial. Return. *Quarrels of the women.* I ride postilion with Billy Vaughn's horses. Went to Williamsburg May 29, 1793. July 7—Left Williamsburg for Philadelphia via Matoax. On the 10th saw R. M. Banister for the last time." (All italics ours.)

So, apparently, John Randolph was at Bizarre on the *noche triste*, and, when Richard Randolph issued from the Glenlyvar mansion, the sky was clear, the air eager and nipping, and the fields, that stretched away from the woodpile, hoar with a heavy mantle of frost. And so, too, apparently, unless John Randolph left Bizarre before the return of Nancy, Richard, and Judith from Glenlyvar, no hint was given to him by any of the three of what had happened there, though, when he reached Battersea,

before the month of October, 1792, had expired, Robert Banister had been already apprised of it by rumor or otherwise. This was the Robert Banister who had been held up by St. George Tucker as an inspiring example to his stepsons. He and John Randolph were on terms of very close intimacy until his early death. "As for Banister," he wrote to Theodore Dudley on Feb. 5, 1822, "he was as a brother from infancy; I could not go amiss in him."[1]

The excerpt which we have just taken from the Diary of Randolph has a value also as furnishing another early illustration of the restless horsemanship which made him as much at home in a saddle as in a chair.

The kindly generous temper of Southside Virginia society, notwithstanding the stern measure of purity which it exacted of women of the dominant race, was remarkably exemplified in the case of Nancy Randolph. The magnanimous conclusion which John Marshall, a man whose long union with his invalid wife was a lovely idyll of marital tenderness and devotion, reached in his notes on the trial has been placed before the reader. And nothing could have been nobler or sounder than the recommendation which the affectionate nature of Jefferson, who had fainted and lain for a time as one dead under the shock of his dear wife's death,[2] made to his daughter, Martha Jefferson Randolph, the wife of Thomas Mann Randolph, Jr., Nancy's brother, with respect to the proper treatment of Nancy in the hour of her humiliation:

"Everyone at present," he said, "stands on the merit or demerit of their own conduct. I am in hopes therefore that neither of you feel any uneasiness but for the pitiable victim, whether it be of error or of slander. In either case, I see guilt in but one person and not in her. For her, it is the moment of trying the affection of her friends when their commiseration

[1] *Letters to a Y. R.*, 253.

[2] *Life of T. J.*, by Randall, v. 1, 382.

and comfort become of value to her wounds. I hope you will deal them out to her in full measure; regardless of what the trifling or malignant may think or say. Never throw off the best affections of nature in the moment when they become most precious to their object, nor fear to extend your hand to save another, lest you should sink yourself. You are on firm ground; your kindness will help her and count in your own favor also. I shall be made very happy if you are the instruments not only of supporting the spirits of your afflicted friend under the weight bearing on them, but of preserving her in the peace and love of her friends."[1]

It is things of this sort that, almost as much as his remarkable tact and sagacity, gave Jefferson his enormous influence as a party leader over the hearts of men. And other persons of the highest social standing and of irreproachable repute in point of character and conduct, such as Judge and Mrs. Peter Johnston, of Prince Edward County, the parents of General Joseph E. Johnston, the Confederate commander, and Mr. and Mrs. Creed Taylor who resided at Needham, in Cumberland County, in the immediate vicinity of Bizarre, were prompt to do what they could to make Nancy feel that it still lay in her power to recover her lost credit. Nor could anything have been more admirable, than the assiduity with which St. George Tucker strove to shield her by recognition and sympathy from the extreme penalties of the terrible situation in which she had involved herself; and, after Tucker's death, Joseph C. Cabell wrote to her that he had ever up to the close of his life spoken of her "in terms of the greatest tenderness and affection"; and that she "partook of a large share of his sympathy and regard."[2] Of course, there were some who were only too glad to pour vinegar instead of oil into her wounds, for, as the letter from Richard Randolph to Judge Tucker, which we have

[1] *Life of T. J.*, by Randall, v. 2, 221.
[2] Sept. 6, 1831, U. of Va. Libr.

mentioned, renders obvious enough, one effect of the scandal was to envenom still more the internecine feud which had previously existed in the bosom of the Randolph connection. "If," Nancy wrote to Joseph C. Cabell on May 30, 1828, "it is the spotless character of William Cabell which Jack Randolph has assailed, I will come forward to show how corrupt that branch of the Randolph family has always been." "Fortunate indeed is it for mankind," she continued, "that the wisdom and mercy of God determined it should soon be extinct."[1] Twice in her letters, written after the Glenlyvar catastrophe, she speaks of herself as if she were the victim of party rage.[2] Among the persons, if we may believe Nancy, who cherished the strongest resentment against her, were Gabriella Harvie (or Randolph), whose second husband was Dr. John Brockenbrough, Mrs. David Randolph, and Mrs. Peyton Randolph.[3]

With the exception of the savage letter which she wrote to John Randolph in 1815, the only unpublished letters from the hand of Nancy which have come under our eye in their original or in a copied form are those written during the period immediately succeeding the catastrophe to Mary Johnston, the wife of Judge Peter Johnston, and Mr. and Mrs. Creed Taylor, those written in the latter part of her life to Joseph C. Cabell, and a brief note or so of the same period to William B. Giles. The letters to Joseph C. Cabell, which boil over at times with hatred of John Randolph, are couched in simple, direct English. But such is not the case with her letters to Mary Johnston. The latter are so artificial and stilted in manner as to suggest a close familiarity with the later novels of Frances Burney especially, and with English novels of the eigh-

[1] U. of Va. Libr.

[2] Letter to Mary Johnston, Feb. 21, 1805; letter to same, undated, Robt. M. Hughes MSS.

[3] Ann Cary Morris to Wm. B. Giles, Mar. 22, 1815, *Va. His. Soc.*

teenth century generally. Indeed, we cannot but think, after reading these letters, that addiction to Tom Jones and Clarissa Harlowe had not a little to do with the train of events which ended in Glenlyvar. In one letter, undated, to Mary Johnston she writes: "I have contracted an acquaintance with that luminary Miss Wheelen. She possesses the most fascinating urbanity of demeanor. . . . Mrs. Wickham, I think transcendently beautiful. Her manners too are vastly attractive."[1] Her way of assuring Mrs. Johnston that she was not unmindful of the generous impulse which had led her to hold out a supporting hand to her was to say: "I feel an irrepressible inclination to unfold my heart since the soothing fact was ascertained of my not being proscribed from the delightful influence of your urbanity."[2] In the same letter, she refers in these terms to an invitation which she had received from the Symeses, after the death of her father, to become their guest:

"Sitting one evening alone, endeavoring to extract a temporary antidote to care from the plaintive notes of a well-toned instrument, a letter was presented me from Miss Syme, slightly acquainted with the Family. I felt overwhelmed by their proffered chalice of tenderness." "Four months," she adds, "was I cherished in their bosoms."

But the most remarkable of all these silken terms and taffeta phrases are the following to the same correspondent: "When a girl I was captivated by an uncommon device on a compartment of a little vase. A modest violet immersed in leaves; the motto, 'I must be sought' (it was in French which language I have lost in the vortex of persecution)."[3] On another occasion, she is so dispirited that

[1] Ann Cary Randolph to Mary Johnston, undated, Robt. M. Hughes MSS.

[2] Same to same, Feb. 21, 1805. *Id.*

[3] Feb. 21, 1805, Robt. M. Hughes MSS.

she says: "For the first time Randolph Harrison's vivacity has failed in its attempts to reanimate me."[1] This Randolph Harrison, of course, was the master of Glenlyvar. And yet, after all this grandiloquence, in one of her letters to Mary Johnston she contrives to say: "There is a degree of oppression which reduces the mind to its native simplicity."[2] But there is a suggestion of pathos as well as humor about this letter, too; for it frankly confesses the fact that Nancy had not been certain that the Johnstons might not rebuff her if she made advances to them. It mentions the fact that Mrs. Johnston's "mama" had kindly assured the writer that Mrs. Johnston's sister would have visited her when she was in Albermarle, if this sister had not been away from home at the time. "After this assurance," Nancy says, "there cannot exist any reluctance [on the part of the Johnstons] to an intercourse with me."

The letters from Nancy to Mr. and Mrs. Creed Taylor (Sally Taylor) are of no real importance. They do show, however, that this couple did not allow her misfortune to affect the intimate relations which had existed between them and her. "My ever dear Sally," are terms in which she addresses Mrs. Taylor in one of the letters[3]; and because, perhaps, of the extent of the intimacy they are all comparatively free from the pretentious extravagance of the letters to Mary Johnston.

In his letter to Tudor, John Randolph does not mention the cause which cut short his connection with William and Mary College in 1792–93. It was a duel in which he became involved with Robert Barraud Taylor, who was afterwards a leading Virginia federalist, a spirited figure in the War of 1812, and an eminent advocate and orator. If Taylor did not win the same degree of distinction at the

[1] Undated, Robt. M. Hughes MSS.
[2] Undated, *Id.*
[3] Undated, Creed Taylor MSS.

Norfolk bar as Littleton Waller Tazewell, he won enough to be considered a close competitor of the latter for professional leadership.[1] (*a*) It seems to have been his fate in his political career to have been associated with "minorities, things under cloud," to use Emerson's phrase. The path to political preferment in Virginia rarely led through the fields of federalism. And then, when Taylor found himself a member of the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1829, he broke with his slave-holding constituents on the issue of white "manhood" suffrage which he favored, and resigned his seat.[2] The letter which he addressed to the Convention in doing so not only betokens a high degree of sincerity and independence of character, but a rare capacity for elegant and pointed composition. In person, he is said to have been very handsome and impressive, and when we are told by Hugh Blair Grigsby that even in manhood his "Southern blood coursed in torrents of fire through his veins," though he was "at times in the highest degree self-poised and calm,"[3] we do not see very well how he and John Randolph could have been at William and Mary together without sooner or later facing each other in a duel of some kind. But Taylor was the challenger, as the Randolph Reminiscences of Littleton Waller Tazewell certify.

"He [Randolph] continued a student of William and Mary but a short time however," says Tazewell, "soon after entering college being challenged by one of his fellow students, and knowing well that expulsion would be the necessary consequence of fighting a duel. To avoid this consequence, he dissolved his connection with the college before he gave the challenger the meeting he had demanded. This meeting proved unfortunate to the challenger who was badly wounded in the duel. To avoid the possible effects of such a transaction,

[1] *Discourse on L. W. T.*, by Grigsby, 33.
[2] *Debates*, 234.
[3] *Discourse on L. W. T.*, by Grigsby, 36.

the friends of John Randolph thought that they consulted his safety by advising him to leave the part of the country in which the duel had taken place. He left Williamsburg in pursuance of this advice."[1]

The origin of this duel is somewhat obscure. Lemuel Sawyer, one of Randolph's biographers, who was in Congress with him for sixteen years, gives this account of the matter:

"While at college he had an affair of honor with a fellow graduate, Robert B. Taylor of Norfolk. They had taken opposite sides in politics and were both fiery spirits and full of Virginia pride of chivalry. Their quarrel arose in a debating society, to which they both belonged, from that most fertile cause, politics. For some personalities of an unpalatable nature, Mr. Taylor challenged him. They met in a field near the town, and the first fire was exchanged without effect. While preparing for the second, Mr. Randolph promised to hit him the next time, which he did, dangerously wounding him in the hip—rather in the posterior or fleshy portion; and he carried the ball in him to the day of his death. They were reconciled on the spot, and Mr. Randolph always spoke of him in the highest terms of admiration."[2]

This is the John Randolph who is thought by Henry Adams to have been easily affected by his fears. But there is a story to the effect that the duel arose from a dispute over a question of pronunciation. When we recollect that John Randolph, as a man, was always an obstinate stickler for correct orthoepy and even on his death-bed was unwilling that the word omnipotent should be uttered in his presence with the accent on the wrong syllable, the story seems not improbable. According to this report, many years after the duel, Randolph met Taylor and promptly said: "Robert, it *was* pronounced

[1] Mrs. Gilbert S. Meem MSS.
[2] Sawyer, 9.

so"; whereupon Taylor as promptly replied with an emphatic denial.[1] One of the worst infirmities of the duel was that it settled nothing, and this story is, at least, a good illustration of that truth. John Randolph not only became completely reconciled to Taylor, but, in a letter to Tazewell, said of him: "He is a noble-hearted fellow and I love him."[2]

[1] Bryan MSS.

[2] Sept. 18, 1807, L. W. Tazewell, Jr., MSS.

CHAPTER IV

Early Manhood

Let us turn again to Randolph's letter to Tudor.[1]

"In June (1794), I came of age. The crop of the year was entirely destroyed and also that of —— by the floods. My guardian showed me no accounts and paid me nothing for the profits of my estate, during a minority of —teen years, and I found myself overwhelmed with overseers' and blacksmiths' and sheriffs' claims of several years' standing. This necessitated the sale of Matoax urged by your father. I made his house (at his request) my home and lived the life of a mere lounger. The society of your father, the conversation and company of John Thompson (for I was half my time in Petersburg) did not wake my literary ambition. I rode about from one race field to another, and, whilst at Newmarket races, my closest friend (your father excepted), Henry Middleton Rutledge (son of E. R. and nephew of the celebrated John R. of S. C.), called at Bizarre on his way to Charleston and, not finding me at home, left a letter informing me of his intended voyage to Europe. I knew Rutledge in New York. We were at college together, and I burned with desire to see him once more. My guardian had always frowned upon my wish to travel, and now I had not the means of indulging the inclination to any extent. I borrowed, however, as much money as would defray the expense of my journey and, in June, 1796, went to Charleston, leaving you an infant in the cradle, and thence to Savannah to see Bryan. I returned in May, and a few weeks afterwards (whilst I lay [ill] of bilious fever at Petersburg), your father,

[1] Dec. 13, 1813, J. C. Grinnan MSS. *Annual Register*, 1832–33, 440.

who had left me convalescent, although I immediately relapsed, was in the most strange and mysterious manner snatched away from me about a week after he had reached his own house. He left considerable debts of his own, produced (as I have before explained to you), and my father's whole estate was under mortgage for debt. Unpractised in business, ignorant of the value of property, I made a compromise with the creditors [and] saved much of the estate that must otherwise have been sacrificed. On you and St. George [Richard Randolph's oldest son, John St. George] my affections and hopes centred, and in you I had the sweetest companions and the most dutiful children. In 1799, chance threw me into public life. The rest you probably know."

The price paid for Matoax was three thousand pounds sterling.[1]

On reaching his majority, it was natural enough that Randolph should settle down at Bizarre. He was familiar with the place, Roanoke, his own estate, was only some forty miles away in Charlotte County, he was unmarried, and he fervidly admired and loved his brother Richard. Besides, the only other community in which he might have been disposed to take up his residence, Williamsburg, the home of St. George Tucker, had become highly obnoxious to him because of the censure with which its people had visited him on account of the duel. This fact comes out in a letter written by him to St. George Tucker on the eve of his final return from Philadelphia to Virginia.

"I will now my dear sir," he said, "touch upon that part of your letter, dated New Year's day, which relates to my studying in Williamsburg. I have found my conduct and character, during my residence in that place, canvassed in so ungenerous and malicious a manner that, were it not the residence of yourself and your beloved family, I never would set foot in it again; but, if you wish me to return, I will conquer my aversion to the place (I ought to have said its inhabitants) as far as

[1] Garland, v. 1, 60.

'tis in my power, and endeavor to avail myself of every advantage which it may afford."[1]

When John Randolph settled down at Bizarre in 1794, its household consisted of the following persons: Mr. and Mrs. Richard Randolph and Nancy; and for a time his cousin, Mrs. Guilford Dudley, and her family also found a shelter from adversity under Richard's roof.[2] (*a*) While residing at Bizarre, before he became a member of Congress, Randolph seems to have lived as much in his saddle as out of it; and the following memorandum from his hand evidences the extraordinary mobility of which he gives us a hint in his letter to Tudor:

November, 1795

Monday 30, Bizarre to D. Meades.

December

Tuesday 1, Capt. Murrays.
3, Richmond.
Wednesday 9, Petersburg.
Thursday 17, Left Petersburg to Genito.
Friday 18, To F. Archers and D. Meades.
Saturday 19, D. Meades to Bizarre; received letter from Rutledge.
Sunday 20, Roanoke.
Sunday 27, From Roanoke to Bizarre.
Tuesday 29, to Roanoke.
Thursday 31, to Bizarre.
January, '96, New Year's day at Bizarre.
Saturday 2, to Major Eggleston's.
Sunday 3, Col. Botts.
Monday 4, Petersburg.
Friday 15, At Genito Bridge.
Saturday 16, at D. Meades. } rain.[3]
Sunday 17, at D. Meades. }

[1] Jan. 26, 1794, Bouldin, 220.

[2] Garland, v. 1, 63; Coalter's Exors *v.* Randolph's Exors, Clk's. Office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

[3] Garland, v. 1, 63.

All in about six weeks, and in two of the most inclement months of Winter! From Dec. 27 to Dec. 31 alone he covered an aggregate distance of 120 miles. Between just what race-tracks he coursed backwards and forwards on horseback we do not know. He was quite frequently at Williamsburg; and there was doubtless still a track there. And the race-track at Petersburg was probably even more of a magnet to him than his brilliant young friend, John Thompson, of that town, whose untimely death at the age of twenty-two elicited from him a memorandum in which he stated, among other things: "He was the author of Gracchus, Cassius, Curtius, written on the subject of American politics. Speak they for him."[1] This exclamation does not seem quite so rhetorical when we recall the fact that Albert G. Beveridge, in his recent life of John Marshall, says of Thompson: "John Thompson, of Petersburg, was one of the most brilliant young men that even Virginia ever produced."[2] (*a*) But Randolph had too much pride of character to be sullied by the vices of the race-track. His interest in racing was that of a gentleman, not of a gambler; as the following letter to St. George Tucker evinces:

"We have all had our fill of racing and dust for these three days past. I have been much distressed by the very unseasonable weather and by the volumes of dust which assail one from every direction. Our very worthy friend, Mrs. Buchanan, has just recovered from a pretty smart and regular fit of the gout. She is, of course, well. If report does not lie greatly, the Blacklegs have had a very fine harvest during the Races, independent of the regular channels of supply which I am told they have but little attended to. They have been employing their talents to great advantage in plucking a young pigeon who ranks very high among the would-be nobility of our country, and who shines forth, a very luminous constellation in the horizon of the fashionable world. The contempt with which I am inspired by

[1] Garland, v. 1, 72. [2] V. 2, 396 (note 2).

the character of the dupe does not diminish the indignation which I feel at the sight of men who rob without fear of detection or punishment, and who prowl about every public place for plunder with the most unblushing effrontery; assuming the airs of gentlemen and exchanging familiar salutations with men of honour."[1]

One happy result of Randolph's equestrian activity was the extension that it gave to his list of acquaintances. Among the persons with whom he was brought into familiar intercourse at this period, was John Wickham, who was afterwards one of the counsel at the trial of Aaron Burr, and not only left behind him a reputation for forensic talents as high, or almost as high, as any ever won in Virginia, but was distinguished by such tactful and polished manners that Thomas Moore, the poet, is said to have declared that he would grace any court in Europe.[2] Mr. Wickham was the agent of the British creditors who held the mortgage on the estates of Richard and John Randolph, and one consequence of the friendship, that sprang up between him and John Randolph, was a new arrangement, which the gratitude of Randolph never forgot, under which the payment of the debt was provided for upon terms more indulgent to the debtors.

Garland, in writing his life of Randolph, was so fortunate as to obtain many details relating to Randolph at this period from Mrs. Dudley. She entertained a bitter feeling of dislike for him in the latter part of his life; but her statements made about him to Garland do not appear to have been tinged by it. She says that he was never long in one place, and that he seemed to have no systematic habits of study, but was yet able, after a careless survey of the pages of a book, to tell what was in it better than persons who had studied it. According to her

[1] Petersburg, May 10, 1799, Lucas MSS.

[2] *Historic Va. Homes, etc.*, by Robt. A. Lancaster, 137.

account, too, his mind at times was hardly in a normal condition. When she was under the Bizarre roof, she never waked in the night without hearing him moving about his chamber which was just below hers, and sometimes he would stride across the floor, exclaiming: "Macbeth hath murdered Sleep! Macbeth hath murdered Sleep!" She had even known him to have his horse saddled in the dead of the night and to ride over the Bizarre plantation with loaded pistols.[1] This insomnia, which hovered over his pillow, throughout his life, was especially aggravated after the death of his brother Richard on June 14, 1796,[2] but was powerless to subdue the deep, underlying strain of increased tenderness for the living—almost the only evidence of compassion that Death ever betrays—which runs through this letter from him to St. George Tucker:

"We have hoped for your consolatory society, my father; but we are doomed to disappointment. May we indulge the idea of seeing you and any of the dear children. If you do come, pray bring Harry with you. I have nobody to unburthen myself to. In silence, are all my sorrows and, in the solitude of the night, indulged. 'Twere more than childish weakness to be unable to preserve some fortitude in the presence of those whom I am bound by every tie to comfort and protect. I am stupefied. Judy is not well; nor are my dear little orphan nephews. Nancy is complaining. With regard to myself, I am tolerably well; but find it scarcely possible to sleep. I go to bed but can not sleep. I turn and toss about, and, altho' it is now late at night, I do assure you that I have not been even in a doze since the night before last; nor am I at all sleepy. 'Tis very strange I do not feel at all unwell but have as little propensity to sleep at night as I ever had at dinner time. Present us all to Mrs. Tucker and Fanny. Would to Heaven that she could come and see us. Never has she crossed the threshold of a brother's door who loved her so tenderly.

[1] Garland, v. 1, 70. [2] *Id.*, 67.

Hal, Beverley and Bet have our loves. Tell my dear Fanny that, as soon as I can, I will write to her. I am obliged both for my dear Judy's and my sake to leave home in a day or two. I dread leaving her alone. God bless you my father, my ever beloved friend. Whilst this heart has motion, it shall ever feel for you the liveliest affection."[1]

Jove has a careless laugh for lover's perjuries, but no smile bitter or sardonic enough for the reproach of falsity which the sad vicissitudes of family concord drew down upon this vow.

Desertion by living friends made the loss of Richard still more sensible. From an early day after the adoption of the Federal Constitution, the opening up to settlement of virgin lands in the South Atlantic Gulf States and the West set up streams of emigration from Virginia. "Our much valued friends, Brett, and Ryland, Randolph," Randolph wrote to Judge Tucker, a week or so after the letter that we have just transcribed,

"are soon to leave this part of the world; Mr. Taylor, one of the most worthy men in the world, whose friendly attentions to this family will ever command their grateful remembrance, proposes removing to Tennessee. These three families have long constituted the whole of the society of that of Bizarre. We shall then be soon deprived of all intercourse with the World. The Island of Juan Fernandez will not be more retired than this spot."[2]

Mr. Taylor [Creed Taylor], however, changed his mind and remained at Needham; to create still another claim upon the gratitude of John Randolph.

In January, 1798, Randolph's outlook had undergone little improvement. In that month, he wrote to St. George Tucker that want of spirits was among his misfortunes. "I am so altered in that particular," he said,

[1] July 18, 1796, Lucas MSS.
[2] Aug. 6, 1796, Lucas MSS.

"that I sometimes reflect with astonishment on the vast fund of hilarity which I once possessed—flown never I fear to return."[1]

Nancy's letters to Mary Johnston, before she left Bizarre forever, are flecked with disaffection and discontent and leave us little reason to doubt that she had but scant good will for Judith. She seems to have thought her sister tyrannical in temper and inclined to impose an unreasonable degree of drudgery upon her. Just what grounds there were for this belief, it is now impossible to say. Those disclosed by the letters are of a nature, under the circumstances, to admit readily of a satisfactory explanation. In one letter, Nancy says: "My presence now operates, like a reproachful conscience, on a sister, and for that I am treated as a culprit. It is the crisis of affairs; the last paroxysm of tyrannic power, exulting over patient endurance."[2] In another letter, written after the close of the precise period with which we are dealing, dated Bizarre, Feb. 21, 1805, the year in which she apparently left that place for good, Nancy refers to an offer of marriage which she had received at some time or other from some source, and then uses this language:

"My mind can not be shackled. Yet my person has willingly resigned itself to various species of real drudgery. Many fevers have I contracted by exertions to which my physical force was incompetent. Months in succession have been devoted to the needle (for Judy who cherishes not a latent spark of affection for me) when my intellects absolutely languished for a little indulgence."[3]

In the same letter, she asks for the loan of *Caleb Williams* and the poems of Collins. The latter, she said, she had

[1] Jan. 30, 1798, Lucas MSS.
[2] Undated, Robt. M. Hughes MSS.
[3] Hughes MSS.

borrowed before, but then Judy had so much work on hand that there never was an interval of leisure for her transcripts. Bread, Judith might well have felt, should be sweeter earned than doled. The real trouble, we suspect, was that Nancy was thinking too much of St. James Park and Ranelagh not to find needle-work on the banks of the Appomattox oppressively dull.

The circumstances, surrounding the trial at Cumberland Court House, and the death of his brother, Richard, sank with the searing force of hot iron into Randolph's memory. Thirty years after the latter event, he could command his emotions only long enough to pen this brief note to his brother, Henry St. George Tucker: "Our poor brother, Richard, was born 1770. He would have been fifty-six years old on the 9th of this month. I can no more. J. R. of R."[1]

An interesting interlude in the life of Randolph, between the time he became of age and his first candidacy for Congress, was a visit that he paid to South Carolina and Georgia in the year 1796. This visit was made in response to the solicitations of his friend, Henry M. Rutledge, whose home was in South Carolina, and of Joseph Bryan, whose home was in Georgia. In the latter part of 1795, Rutledge had stopped at Bizarre on his way home from the North; but Randolph was absent at the time. The consequence was a letter, in which Randolph wrote to Rutledge as follows:

"In the anticipation of seeing you is every other idea absorbed. In ten days or a fortnight, I shall commence my progress towards Charleston. No child was ever more impatient than I am of this delay. Adieu, my very dear Henry. Believe me with a sincerity, which you will never have reason to question, your friend. If there is any other term more expressive of a pure affection between man and man, supply it."[2]

[1] Garland, v. 1, 68.

[2] Dec. 28, 1795, *Pa. Hist. Soc.*

Bryan was as cordial as Rutledge in urging Randolph to make the journey, which, in that day of boggy roads, bridgeless streams, rude inns, and giant trees tottering in decay to their fall along the densely canopied roadsides, was no slight undertaking.

"You will find me on the seacoast," Bryan wrote, "and, as you bribe me with a pipe, I can promise in return the best Spanish segars and the best of liquors, good horses, deer hunting in perfection, good companions; that is to say, not merely bottle crackers Jack, but good sound, well informed Democrats."[1]

How Randolph fared on his horseback ride to Charleston we do not know. The first glimpse that we get of him after his departure from Bizarre is in the *Reminiscences of the Last Sixty-five Years* of E. S. Thomas.

"On a bright sunny morning, early in February, 1796," this writer says, "might have been seen entering my bookstore in Charleston, S. C., a fine-looking, florid complexioned, old gentleman, with hair white as snow, which, contrasted with his own complexion, showed him to have been a free liver or *bon-vivant* of the first order. Along with him, was a tall, gawky-looking, flaxen-haired stripling, apparently of the age from 16 to 18, with a complexion of a good parchment color, beardless chin, and as much assumed self-consequence as any two-footed animal I ever saw. This was John Randolph. I handed him from the shelves volume after volume which he tumbled carelessly over and handed back again. At length, he hit upon something that struck his fancy; my eye happened to be fixed upon his face at the moment; and never did I witness so sudden, so perfect, a change of the human countenance. That which before was dull and heavy, in a moment, became animated and flushed with the brightest beams of intellect. He stepped up to the old grey-headed gentleman, and, giving him a thundering slap on the shoulder, said: 'Jack, look at this!' I was young then, but I never can forget the thought that rushed upon my mind at the moment, which was

[1] Garland, v. 1, 64.

that he was the most impudent youth I ever saw. He had come to Charleston to attend the races. There was then living in Charleston a Scotch baronet, by the name of Sir John Nesbit, with his younger brother, Alexander, of the ancient house of Nesbits, of Dean Hall, some 15 miles from Edinburgh. Sir John was a very handsome man, and as 'gallant [a] gay Lothario' as could be found in the City. He and Randolph became intimate; which led to a banter between them for a race in which each was to ride his own horse. The race came off during the same week and Randolph won; some of the ladies exclaiming at the time: 'though Randolph had won the race, Sir John had won their hearts.' This was not so much to be wondered at when you contrasted the elegant form and graceful style of riding of the Baronet with the uncouth and awkward manner of his competitor."[1]

Our knowledge of the manner in which Randolph passed his time in Georgia is very meagre, but that his stay there was attended by some little convivial competition we may infer from a letter written by Bryan to him after his return to Virginia, in which the former says: "My eldest brother still bears a friendly remembrance of the *rum ducking* you gave him."[2]

A letter, which Randolph wrote to Rutledge from Columbia, South Carolina, on his return journey, gives us an insight into some of the hardships that he must have experienced during his long ride from Bizarre to Georgia and from Georgia back to Bizarre.

"I have just time, my friend," he said, "to inform you that I am thus far on my journey, without having met with any untoward circumstances, except being obliged to go without either food or bed at a Major Hall's near the Walnut. Luckily, I had a good bearskin, and, with that and my surtout (at the same time comforting myself with the reflection that many a better man had lodged much worse), made a bed not *entirely*

[1] Garland, v. 1, 65. [2] *Id.*, 66.

destitute of comfort, and slept soundly all night in despight of bugs, fleas and filth."[1]

Luckily, his good horse held out to the end; but barely so, however, for Randolph wrote to St. George Tucker: "The faithful Jacobin died the day after he got home of the Carolina distemper, after having carried his master a long journey of 1800 miles."[2] Randolph began life on a Jacobin, a name suggested to him by the Gallic *furor* of the time, and it was a Radical that he threatened to mount at the close of his career, when Andrew Jackson had issued the proclamation against Nullification, which he, for one, was ready to meet with "man and steel, the soldier and his sword," instead of dialectical subtleties.[3] In a letter, written some 13 years later to Joseph H. Nicholson of Maryland, with whom he had served for a time in Congress, Randolph recalled the fact that he had faced the "deserts of Carolina" in mid-winter.[4] But a letter which he wrote to Rutledge from Bizarre, after his return from the South, bears testimony to the fact that his sojourn in Charleston, at any rate, had been a delightful one.

"You wish me in your absence to visit Charleston to view it with your eyes," he said, "I sincerely wish it were in my power to comply with the first part of your request; there would be no necessity for observing the second, since you yourself are not more partial to that charming place than I am. Have I not every reason to be so? Have I not received the most friendly and flattering attentions from your friends, whom I now with pride and pleasure rank among the number of my own. If you have not heard lately from them, it will give you pleasure to be informed that they were well a few weeks ago. This information I obtained from a gentleman who left Charleston since the races, and of whom I made very particular enquiries. He also

[1] *Pa. Hist. Soc.*
[2] July 26, 1796, Lucas MSS.
[3] *Famous Americans*, by Parton, 181.
[4] Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

informed me that the display of beautiful women, gallant fellows, and elegant equipages was unusually brilliant; that our friend, Genl Washington's horse, Shark, won the jockey club purse and a sweep-stakes of 400 guineas each. Mr. Alston and Col. Hampton were his competitors in this last race; and that Fenwick's Commerce won the city purse. I relate these things because I know by experience how interesting the most trifling particulars concerning our country are when we are divided from it by great distance."[1]

[1] April 29, 1797, *Pa. Hist. Soc.*

CHAPTER V

Congressional Career, Début and Period of Leadership

There is little in the letters written by John Randolph, during the period of five years immediately preceding his first candidacy for Congress that manifests any unusual interest in politics.

In several, however, he does reveal the fact that he, too, like most of his friends, in Southside Virginia, had become badly afflicted with the Gallomania of the time. One of these letters, for instance, is dated "19 Florial, 4th year, 7th May, 1796, O. S."[1]; another "24 June, 21 of Indep; 6 Messidor, 5 of Fr. Rep."; and still another "30 Janr'y, 22d Indepen., II, Pluviose, 6th year."[2] The *Sansculotte* successor of the classic Saturnus, God of the Strong Hours and the Swift Course of Time, had ushered in the Golden Age, only pausing now and then long enough to devour a few of his own children; and to Randolph and his fellow-enthusiasts it seemed natural enough that to him should be surrendered the office of naming the months of the year. "Mr." Taylor, "Mr." Johnston, and "Mr." Randolph went entirely out of vogue as forms of epistolary address, and were succeeded by "Citizen" Taylor, "Citizen" Johnston, and "Citizen" Randolph. Thus, in a letter addressed to "Citizen" Taylor, Needham, we find Richard Randolph even writing to Creed Taylor as follows: "Dear Citizen: I am obliged to apply to your neigh-

[1] J. R. to St. G. Tucker, Lucas MSS.
[2] J. R. to same, *Id.*

bourly assistance for a small supply of spirituous liquor of any sort you may have," and then, after a reference to "Citizen" Ryland, concluding: "Your Fellow-citizen and Friend."[1] A later letter from Richard to Taylor in the same jargon establishes the fact that his request had been honored with a supply of whiskey, and that the substantial equivalent of this whiskey, in both quality and quantity, had been duly returned. But the most important letter that John Randolph ever wrote in terms borrowed from the French language of Equality and Fraternity was the following to Creed Taylor, which leaves us no reason to doubt that his first candidacy for Congress was not the bold, spectacular thing that it has frequently been represented to have been, but had its origin in the patronage of an eminent lawyer and influential politician, (*a*) and would have been abandoned without the least hesitation if this patronage had been withdrawn.

"BIZARRE, 16 September,
23d of Independence.

"DEAR CITIZEN:

"I received your letter of the 13th inst. this morning. You must be equally conscious with myself that the idea of representing this district in Congress never originated with me; and I believe I may with truth assert that it is one which I never should have entertained, had it not been suggested, in the first instance, by my friends. I am now as well satisfied, as I was when you first made to me the proposal of permitting my friends to declare my willingness to serve my fellow-citizens in the House of Representatives, that it is an office to which I can not rationally entertain the *smallest pretensions*. I, therefore, willingly resign *any which my friends may have formed for me* to any person whom they may approve, and shall feel happy in giving my vote—interest I have none, and did I possess any, my principles would forbid my using it on such an occasion—to a man for whose character I entertain so

[1] Jan. 28, 1795, *Creed Taylor Papers*.

high an opinion as that which I have borne ever since my acquaintance with him for Citizen Daniel's. When I was in Amelia, I wrote to Citizen Venable, informing him briefly of the authentic report of his intended resignation, and also that some of my friends had proposed taking a vote for me. This I was impelled to do by my sense of propriety, since to me it appeared highly indelicate that such a thing should be *even whispered* before he was informed that it was in agitation. Accept Citizen my most sincere regards and believe me with truth your friend.

"John Randolph, Jr."[1]

Randolph had not yet added to his signature the appendage "of Roanoke" which was subsequently to become as much a part of his name as if it too had been conferred upon him at the baptismal font. (*a*)

Many years after the date of this letter he again acknowledged the agency of Creed Taylor in opening up a political career for him. It was in a letter to Dr. John Brockenbrough.

"I have a new passion arising within me," he said, "which occupies me incessantly—the improvement of my estate. But for three men—A. B. V., your old master [Abraham B. Venable] Creed Taylor and Patrick Henry, I should have commenced thirty years ago what now I can hardly begin—finish never."

Abraham B. Venable was the predecessor of Dr. Brockenbrough as President of the Bank of Virginia, and was a member of the House of Representatives from 1791–99.[2]

When Randolph became a Democratic candidate for Congress in 1799 from the District composed of Charlotte, Prince Edward, Cumberland, and Buckingham Counties, and undertook to answer Patrick Henry at Charlotte Court House, Virginia, on March County Court

[1] J. M. Lear MSS. [2] Garland, v. 2, 307.

day in that year, he had never made a public speech, and Henry enjoyed a renown as an orator which on that day drew to the court green and its environs almost every white man in Prince Edward and Charlotte Counties who was not sick, halt, or blind; even emptying Hampden Sidney College in Prince Edward County, twelve or fifteen miles away, of its professors and students.[1] Like the hurrying waters of Turnip, Cub, and Horsepen Creeks, and of Ward's Fork, and the Little Roanoke, on their way to the Staunton, were the streams of human beings, made up of the contributions of innumerable roads and woodland paths, which poured in gigs, on horseback, and on foot into the little village for the purpose of hearing a man whose fame exercised an ascendancy over their admiration and reverence second, if second at all, only to that of Washington. Red Hill, Henry's home, was some twenty miles distant from the Court House, and, in his infirm condition, he had been prudent enough to spend the night before court-day at the house of a friend, three miles away from the Court House[2]; (*a*) so as to refresh his body by a brief interval of rest for the exertions of the next day. More than one writer has told the history of the events which followed when Henry, after declining the highest federal offices in the gift of Washington, appeared at his request at Charlotte Court House as a candidate for a seat in the Virginia Senate, where it was thought by Washington that the orator's marvelous tongue could do much to allay the disaffection excited by the Alien and Sedition Laws and to counteract the separatist tendencies of the Virginia Resolutions of 1798; how Henry descended from his carriage at the Court House, and was surrounded and followed about by the people as if they sought to touch the hem of his garment and to feel the thrill of some miraculous communication from it; how feelingly, in the

[1] *Pat. Henry*, by Henry, v. 2, 606.
[2] *Ibid.*, and note.

deep religious humility which was a part of his character, he turned to a Baptist minister, whose piety, affronted by this extraordinary homage, had broken out into the reproach, "Mr. Henry is not a God," and exclaimed: "No, no, indeed, my friend, I am but a poor worm of the dust—as fleeting and unsubstantial as the shadow of the cloud that flies over your fields and is remembered no more"; how he began his address in a voice slightly cracked and tremulous from physical weakness but, as he proceeded, underwent again something of the old transfiguration of aspect, and spoke again with something of the old dithyrambic and dramatic power; and how, when a drunken man cried out that he would dare to lift his hand against Washington, he rose aloft in all his former majesty and in a voice most solemn and penetrating declared: "No, you durst not do it. In such a parricidal attempt, the steel would drop from your nerveless arm."[1] In recalling this last incident, we quote the exact language of Dr. Archibald Alexander, afterwards the first professor of the Princeton Theological Seminary, who was one of Henry's auditors, and who seems to have been among the few persons who ever heard Henry at his best without a total surrender of the critical faculty. "Mr. Henry," he said, "came to the place with difficulty, and was plainly destitute of his wonted vigour and commanding power. The speech was nevertheless a noble effort, such as could have proceeded from none but a patriotic heart."[2] This is a very different description of Henry's appeal from that of John Miller, of South Carolina, a young student of Hampden Sidney College, who also heard it, and brought away from it impressions which portray Henry very much as he was before "sad mortality" had "o'er-swayed"

[1] *Pat. Henry*, by Henry, v. 2, 605, 608; *Hist. Colls. of Va.*, by Howe, 224; *Life of Archibald Alexander, D. D.*, by Jas. W. Alexander, D. D., 188; Garland, v. 1, 129; *Pat. Henry*, by Moses Coit Tyler, 370.

[2] *Life of Archibald Alexander, D.D., supra*, 188.

the commanding power of which Dr. Alexander speaks[1]; or from the exclamation at the close of the speech, which is ascribed to the Rev. John Holt Rice, of Hampden Sidney, a very able and sober-minded man: "The sun has set in all his glory"[2]; or from the hysterical laudations of biographers who have preferred myth to history, and, disdaining the trammels of contemporary testimony, have exhausted every form of encomiastic extravagance in depicting Henry's last appearance upon the hustings. But Dr. Alexander, who has freely confessed the overmastering influence exercised by Henry over his own mind on other occasions, and who has told us that "the power of his eloquence was felt equally by the learned and the unlearned,"[3] has, we suspect, given us the most trustworthy account that has come down to us of the real nature of Henry's last speech. Indeed, but for him the greater part of the evidence, bearing upon the Henry-Randolph debate, would hardly rise above the dignity of prehistoric fables or Chinese ancestor-idolatry. "The first time that I ever dreamed of speaking in public," Randolph told Francis Scott Key, "was on the eve of my election in March 1799, when I opposed myself (fearful odds) to Patrick Henry."[4] The odds seemed all the more appalling to him, it is fair to infer, because in his numerous horseback rides over the face of Southside Virginia he must have frequently heard Henry plead before juries, and he had certainly heard him not only at the Richard Randolph trial but in the famous British Debtor's Cause at Richmond which was argued a few days after that trial—a cause in which he and Richard were personally interested by reason of the British incumbrance on their own estate.[5] His recollections of Henry in this case were fortunately

[1] *Pat. Henry*, by Henry, v. 2, 606.
[2] *Id.*, 610.
[3] *Life of Archibald Alexander, D.D., supra*, 183.
[4] Feb. 17, 1814, Garland, v. 2, 31.
[5] *Pat. Henry*, by Henry, *supra*, v. 2, 493.

preserved for us by James W. Bouldin, a citizen of Charlotte County, and appear in the following form in William Wirt Henry's *Life of Patrick Henry*:

"Managing to work his way through the crowd, he [Randolph] gained a position near enough to the Judges to hear their conversation. He said the Chief Justice told Iredell who had never heard Mr. Henry that he was the greatest of orators. Iredell doubted it, and, becoming impatient to hear him, they requested him to proceed with his argument before he had intended to speak. Randolph described Mr. Henry as presenting the appearance of an old man, very much wrapped up, and resting his head on the bar. As he arose, he began to complain that it was a hardship too great to put the laboring oar in the hands of a decrepit old man, trembling, with one foot in the grave, weak in his best days, and far inferior to the able associates by him. Randolph said, although he knew it was all put on, still such was the power of his manner and voice that he would in a moment forget and find himself enraged with the Court for their 'cruelty.' He then gave a brilliant outline of Mr. Henry's progress in his argument, and compared him to the practising of a first-rate, four mile race-horse, sometimes displaying his whole power and speed, for a few leaps, and then taking up again. At last, Randolph said, he got up to full speed, and took a rapid view of what England had done when she had been successful in arms; and what would have been our fate had we been unsuccessful. The color began to come and go in the face of the Chief Justice while Iredell sat with his mouth and eyes stretched open in perfect wonder. Finally, Henry arrived at his utmost height and grandeur. He raised his hands in one of his grand and solemn pauses. Randolph said his hands seemed to cover the whole house. There was a tumultuous burst of applause and Judge Iredell exclaimed: 'Gracious God! He is an orator indeed!'"[1]

Indeed, throughout Randolph's life, the eloquence of Henry was a theme with which his conversation often

[1] *Pat. Henry*, by Henry, 2, 473.

glowed. "He was Shakespeare and Garrick combined," was one of his utterances.[1] (*a*) It might sound preposterously tumid, had it not issued from the mouth of a rigorous, not to say fastidious, critic whose geese were rarely swans, and had not Dr. Alexander in his remarkable analysis of Henry's attributes as an orator said, after giving the first place to "the greatness of his emotion and passion," that he never indulged "in an expression that was not instantly accepted as nature itself," and could not have achieved his oratorical triumphs but for "a matchless perfection of the organs of expression, including the entire apparatus of voice, intonation, pause, gesture, attitude, and indescribable play of countenance."[2] Referring on one occasion in the House of Representatives to a Bill, providing for the state-wide election of Presidential electors, which had been carried in the Virginia House of Delegates by a Democratic majority of only five votes, Randolph exclaimed: "Had Patrick Henry lived, and taken his seat in the Assembly, that law would never have passed. In that case, the electoral votes of Virginia would have been divided and Mr. Jefferson lost his election! Five votes! Mr. Chairman! Patrick Henry was good for five times five votes doubled in that body."[3] Even the careless sayings, such as "misfortune toughens manhood,"[4] of a man, not more justly entitled to fame because of his eloquence than because of his profound wisdom in regard to everything that relates to the proper conduct of our individual lives, or to the lasting happiness of commonwealths, was often on Randolph's tongue. And it is to a paper drawn up by his hand, shortly after the joint discussion at Charlotte Court House, and placed under the eye of William Wirt, when he was writing

[1] *Pat. Henry*, by Henry, 2, 493.
[2] *Life of Archibald Alexander, D.D., supra*, 191.
[3] *Hist. Colls. of Va.*, by Howe, 225, *A. of C.*, 1816–17; v. 2, 799.
[4] J. R. to Edw. Booker, Apr. 13, 1823, Mrs. J. Spooner Epes MSS.

the life of Henry, that we are indebted for an abstract of what Henry really uttered on that occasion.[1]

The audacity in the début of John Randolph did not consist in the fact that he became a candidate, but in the fact that, becoming a candidate, he did not shrink from facing such an antagonist as Patrick Henry. To residents of Charlotte County who knew Randolph simply as a restless young devotee of the stubble-field and the race-track, that thought no more of galloping over the forty mile stretch between Bizarre and Roanoke than a wild pigeon would of passing between the same points in the air, such a competition seemed unimaginable. "Mr. Taylor," Col. Read, the Clerk of the Charlotte County Court, asked of Creed Taylor, "Don't you or Peter Johnston mean to appear for that young man today?" "Never mind," replied Randolph's sponsor, who had lived too near Bizarre not to be sure of his man, and was such a bigoted Democrat that he did not scruple, during the delivery of Henry's speech, to keep up, in the hearing of Dr. Archibald Alexander and others, a strain of caustic comment on it, and even to declare that the old man was in his dotage, "He can take care of himself."[2] And there can be no doubt that Randolph did take care of himself. All that Dr. Alexander has to say on the subject, aside from his statement that, when Randolph rose, Henry retired from the scene, after requesting a friend to report to him anything which might require an answer, is this: "Randolph began by saying that he had admired that man more than any on whom the sun had shone but that now he was constrained to differ from him *toto coelo*. But Randolph was suffering with the hoarseness of a cold and could scarcely utter an audible sentence."[3] This is but a dry, jejune chronicle, indeed, when compared with the fictitious

[1] *Pat. Henry*, by Henry, v. 2, 611.
[2] Garland, v. 1, 130.
[3] *Life of Archibald Alexander, D.D., supra*, 189.

Randolph, who is pictured by Garland as standing in silence some moments before he began his exordium, "his lips quivering, his eye swimming in tears,"[1] and is credited by him with a long speech which, after occupying some seven or eight pages of his work, is dismissed with these naïve observations: "We do not pretend, reader, to give you the language of John Randolph on this occasion; nor are we certain even that the thoughts are his."[2] A speech, which is not avouched as authentic either as respects words or thoughts, is, of course, not entitled to much consideration at the hands of a biographer who does not belong to the legendary age of American history. Nor need we linger long upon what Garland has to say about Henry's "sinking orb" and Randolph's "youthful beams"[3]; for the chariot of the Sun is never more likely to be fatal to an ambitious Phaëton than when harnessed in the service of rhetorical imagery. So much of Garland's account of the discussion is purely imaginary that we even hesitate to accept his statement, for which no authority is cited, that Dr. Hoge heard Randolph out and turned away repeating the lines from the *Deserted Village:*

> "Amazed the gazing rustics ranged around,
> And still they gazed and still the wonder grew
> That one small head could carry all he knew."[4]

And in the face of Dr. Alexander's statement that, after closing, Henry entirely withdrew from the spot where the discussion took place and did not return,[5] we find it difficult to believe, in the absence of specific testimony to that effect, that Henry sat through Randolph's speech, and at its end took him by the hand and said: "Young man, you call me father; then my son I have somewhat to say unto thee (holding both his hands)—*keep justice, keep truth* and you will live to think differently"; or that Henry turned

[1] Garland, v. 1, 133. [2] *Id.*, 141. [3] *Id.*, 142. [4] *Id.*, 141.
[5] *Life of Archibald Alexander, D.D.*, by Jas. W. Alexander, 189.

to some by-stander and said: "I haven't seen the little dog before since he was at school; he was a great atheist then."[1] The statement of Garland that Henry and Randolph dined together after the debate is more probable, because where there was no unquestionably valid excuse, it would have been an impolitic thing for a candidate for public office, after courting the favor of the populace, not to have dined democratically with the leading spirits of the occasion at the Court House tavern. Along with what Dr. Alexander has to say about Randolph's speech, we should also bear in mind that, in his valuable *Reminiscences of the Home Life of John Randolph of Roanoke*, Powhatan Bouldin tells us that he had read a certificate from Col. Clem Carrington, one of the most prominent citizens of Charlotte County in his day, in regard to what Henry actually said in his speech about the Alien and Sedition Bills and other political questions, in which Col. Carrington stated that Randolph "was not much attended to."[2] Col. Clem Carrington, however, was the Federalist aspirant for the seat in Congress that Randolph was seeking, and there were, therefore, both partisan and personal reasons why his judgment about the reception accorded to Randolph's speech by the concourse at Charlotte Court House should not be accepted without some degree of reserve.

If Randolph was suffering from such a severe cold that he could scarcely utter an audible sentence, as Dr. Alexander says, and was not much attended to, as Col. Carrington says, it is hard to believe that he could have spoken three hours, as Garland, relying doubtless wholly upon tradition, declares that he did,[3] or that he could have achieved a signal oratorical triumph. He was laboring under vocal distress, the thing of all others most dispiriting to a speaker; he had never before made a public address;

[1] Garland, v. 1, 141.
[2] Bouldin, 201. [3] Garland, v. 1, 141.

knowledge of his talents was limited to his friends and acquaintances; and he spoke under the shadow of a transcendent reputation. Under such circumstances, it may well have been that his first introduction to the public was not accompanied by any especial éclat. But there is good reason to believe that, if he did not come off on this occasion *cum magna laude*, he came off at least *cum laude*. Tradition is a dubious witness but a certain amount of truth is usually mingled even with the *ambiguas voces* that it scatters as it goes, and the traditions are all to the effect that Randolph acquitted himself handsomely in his reply to Henry. Besides, his first speech of any length in Congress was so unmistakably marked by the "full throated ease" of a born orator, and his ascent to the highest levels of parliamentary fame was so amazingly rapid from the very beginning that it would be strange, indeed, if there had been no presage in his Charlotte Court House speech of his remarkable future as a speaker. Moreover, if it is true that when he began to speak an Irishman exclaimed: "Tut! tut! It won't do, its nothing but the bating of an old tin pan after hearing a fine church organ" —a story which we derive from a singularly untruthful and inflated article by E. H. Cummins in the second American edition of the *New Edinburgh Encyclopedia*, published in 1817[1]—it is equally true that, as he proceeded, he extorted a homely but none the less significant compliment from another illiterate auditor. The story of this compliment was derived from Dr. John Holt Rice, a witness as unexceptionable as Dr. Alexander himself, who was also present at the debate, by the author of a *Memoir* of Dr. Rice mentioned in the *Virginia Historical Register* who tells it in this fashion:

"The man [a countryman present at the debate], it seems, drank all Mr. Henry's words with open mouth as well as ears,

[1] *Hist. Colls. of Va.*, by Howe, 225.

and, when the orator [Henry] closed his address, stood still waiting for more last words from those wonderful lips; thinking no doubt (as he showed by his looks) that such a talker was the only man in the world worth hearing. Accordingly when Mr. Randolph immediately afterwards got up to make something like a reply to Mr. Henry (though they were not rival candidates but only of opposite politics), Clodpole appeared to regard it as a great piece of presumption in anyone, especially such a beardless whipster, to attempt to speak after Old Patrick, and was evidently most doggedly determined not to hear a word that he could say. By degrees, however, the clear, silver tones and spirit-stirring accents of the youthful orator began to produce their effect upon him in spite of himself, and, after listening to him for a little while, he turned around to another countryman at his elbow, and, with the most comical expression of face, 'I tell you what,' said he, 'the young man is no bug-eater neither.' "

Earlier sentences in this *Memoir* are even more significant. "He [Dr. Rice]," says the writer, "was of course greatly pleased with both orators; though he paid his special homage, as he told me, to the setting rather than the rising sun." The publication of the Clodpole story in this *Memoir*, it is only fair to say, drew out a letter from a correspondent of the *Register* in Charlotte County who asserted that he had heard Col. Clem Carrington "declare again and again that Randolph spoke very little and mainly to the purport that as Henry was once so he was then."[1] And our résumé of the testimony in regard to Randolph's speech would be incomplete were it to omit an important statement made by Daniel B. Lucas, the distinguished Virginia lawyer, and the author, among other poems, of the beautiful lines entitled, "In the Land where we were Dreaming," in an address delivered by him before the Literary Societies of Hampden-Sidney College on June 13, 1883.

[1] *Va. Hist. Register*, v. 4, 34–36. See also *Memoir of the Rev. Jno. H. Rice*, by William Maxwell, 20.

"I am quite convinced," he said, "that he [Randolph] overthrew Henry. I once had in my hand and retained for twenty-four hours his own account of this encounter [the Charlotte Court House tourney] in a letter to St. George Tucker. God forgive me for not having copied and preserved it from the vortex of fire, blood and flame into which it afterwards drifted and was consumed! [At Richmond, April 3, 1865.] According to my recollection, he described the extreme reluctance which he felt in rising to oppose so great a man, but, as no one else would assume the burden, he was constrained by the imperative call of patriotic duty. He then proceeded to give a modest and brief account of the positions assumed respectively by Henry and himself; spoke of Henry's accustomed fervor and eloquence and very modestly yet with sufficient self-satisfaction of his own part in the discussion."[1] (*a*)

On the whole, despite the muffling effect of a bad cold and the other untoward agencies which made the footlights seem dimmer than they really were, while Randolph was speaking, the feelings of Clodpole, we suspect, were about the feelings of all who had curiosity enough to listen to Randolph after Henry had ceased. Even in his decline, there was no such orator as Henry; but in time the young man too would be a conspicuous figure in public life. In addition to his federalist opponent, Col. Clem Carrington, Randolph had an opponent in Powhatan Bolling, a fellow-Republican. He was related to Randolph, and was as sensitive as he to any encroachment upon his personal self-respect, if we may form our judgment about the matter from what Garland says of him in connection with the Henry-Randolph debate:

"There also was Powhatan Bolling the other candidate for Congress, dressed in his scarlet coat—tall, proud in his bearing, and a fair representative of the old aristocracy, fast melting away under the sub-divisions of the law that had abolished the system of primogeniture. Creed Taylor and others under-

[1] P. 6.

took to banter him about his scarlet coat. 'Very well, gentlemen,' replied he coolly, bristling up with a quick temper, 'if my coat does not suit you, I can meet you in any other color that may suit your fancy.'"[1]

Like the scarlet coat of the hunter, bursting suddenly upon our sight in the greenwood, is this incident to the imagination engaged in reconstructing the spirit of the old Virginia Past.

In the month of April, succeeding the discussion at Charlotte Court House, Patrick Henry and Randolph were both elected; Henry to the Virginia Senate and Randolph to the House of Representatives; but Henry died before he could take his seat. In a letter to his niece, Randolph, musing long afterwards over his first candidacy for Congress, has this to say of it:

"If I had been defeated in my first attempt to be elected to Congress two and thirty years ago, I never should have become a candidate again, and the whole tenor of my life would have been changed. I was at Buckingham on the day of election, and so great was the majority in favour of one of my competitors there that I had not the slightest expectation of being returned, and I well remember my fixed determination never again to place myself in a similar predicament."[2]

But who does not remember Benedict's excuse that, when he said that he would die a bachelor, he did not think that he would live till he were married? At the time of his election, Randolph was under twenty-five years of age, the minimum age prescribed by the Federal Constitution for a member of the lower House of Congress; but he became twenty-five before he was sworn in. When Congress convened, and he appeared for the purpose of taking his oath of office, the clerk of the House, or perhaps the Speaker, Theodore Sedgwick, was struck with his juvenile

[1] Garland, v. 1, 130.
[2] Dec. 22, 1830, Bryan MSS.

appearance, and asked him whether he was old enough to be eligible. "Ask (or go ask) my constituents," was the curt reply which has been so often repeated.[1]

The first session of the Sixth Congress was held at Philadelphia on Dec. 2, 1799, during the Presidency of John Adams. Among the members of the Senate, while this Congress lasted, were John Langdon, of New Hampshire, Wilson Cary Nicholas, of Virginia, and Gouverneur Morris, of New York; and, among the members of the House of Representatives, were Joseph B. Varnum, of Massachusetts, Matthew Lyon, of Vermont, Edward Livingston, of New York, Andrew Gregg, Albert Gallatin, and John Smilie, of Pennsylvania, Joseph H. Nicholson, Samuel Smith, and Gabriel Christie of Maryland, John Marshall and John Nicholas, of Virginia, Willis Alston, Nathaniel Macon, and Richard Stanford, of North Carolina, Robert Goodloe Harper and Thomas Sumter, of South Carolina, and William Henry Harrison, the Representative of the Territory of the United States Northwest of the River Ohio.[2] The House was under the control of the Federalists, and, after one ineffectual ballot, this control was asserted by the election of Theodore Sedgwick, of Massachusetts, as Speaker.[3] The first appearance of Randolph in debate was on Dec. 30, 1799, on a motion by John Nicholas to strike out the words in a Bill providing for the census of 1800, which conferred upon the Secretary of State supervisory authority over the marshals and territorial secretaries who were to take it. As reported, Randolph's speech is very brief, but it is pointed and breathes the spirit of unfaltering self-confidence. The motion was lost.[4] Randolph's next appearance was on Jan. 2, 1800, in connection with the petition of Absalom

[1] *Hist. Colls. of Va.*, by Howe, 225; Sawyer, 12.
[2] *Annals of Congress*, 1799–1801, 9, 22, 172, 185, 187.
[3] *Id.*, 186. [4] *Id.*, 212, 221, 222.

Jones and others, free men of color of the City and County of Philadelphia, or rather of the good Quakers who were behind them, asking among other things for "the adoption of such measures as shall in due course emancipate the whole of their brethren from their present situation."[1] Again he is reported as speaking briefly, but as before with no inflection of uncertainty. He hoped, he said, that the conduct of the House would be so decided as to deter the petitioners, or any persons acting for them, from ever presenting any petition of a similar nature thereafter. The Constitution had put it out of the power of the House to do anything in regard to the one before them, and he therefore trusted that the occasion would be the last on which the interests and feelings of the Southern States would be put in jeopardy by similar applications.[2] He lived long enough, of course, to realize what a cheat the hope was; and it would serve no good purpose to track the petition through the mazes of parliamentary procedure, in which it became involved, until it was finally disposed of by one of the compromises which were so common so long as members of Congress from anti-slavery communities struggled to reconcile their aversion to human bondage with their legal obligations under the Federal Constitution.[3] A day or so later, a resolution offered by John Nicholas, looking to the reduction of the regular army, gave Randolph his first real opportunity to display the peculiar powers of speech which from that time on commanded the unflagging attention of the House of Representatives.[4] It received his earnest—indeed vehement and uncompromising—support; for jealousy of standing armies was always a feature of the general jealousy of arbitrary power which was the governing principle of his political life; and this settled fear of military despotism, it is only fair to him to remember, had been handed down

[1] *Annals of Congress*, 1799–1801, 229.
[2] *A. of C.*, 1799–1801, 233. [3] *Id.*, 245. [4] *Id.*, 247.

to him from our English ancestors, had become one of the constitutional maxims of American civil polity, and was almost universally shared by his democratic fellow-statesmen. Indeed, disastrously as it has again and again kept us back from a proper state of preparedness for war, vigorously as it has been counteracted by the recent world-conflict, and the profound change worked by that conflict in our former sense of geographical remoteness, it is still a potent force to be reckoned with. Even in the last years of the Eighteenth Century, there were a few men, like Washington, wise enough to recognize the truth that, except under wholly extraordinary conditions, one sword does tend to keep another in its scabbard; and that a nation which does not habitually strive to arm itself adequately against foreign invasion is as fatuous as an ordinary householder who does not take the proper precautions against fire and thieves. Especially laudable was the robust, sagacious attitude which John Adams, a man whose failings were but little more than skin-deep, but whose virtues were a part of the very marrow of his bones, always maintained on this subject. But, as a rule, these men were like the voice of the cuckoo in June, heard but not regarded, and they were readily cried down by the short-sighted politicians who met their appeals with scoffs, pleas of economy and the time-honored tenet that a standing army is a menace to the liberties of a free people.

Better illustrations than the two speeches of Randolph on this occasion of what Shakespeare calls "the rattling tongue of saucy and audacious eloquence," it would be hard to imagine. They are free from the digressions and parentheses which characterized his later speeches; though wanting in their power of terse, concentrated, and vivid expression. Orderly in structure and pat to the point, they flow along with a brisk and smooth movement that no unpracticed speaker could ever hope to emulate, unless possessed of the

same natural gift of eloquence. That the first of the two speeches was an incisive one is evidenced by the frequent references to it made by succeeding speakers. And Randolph's diction, when delivering this speech, must have sounded very precise and finished to the ear; for, alluding to the use of the word "squeeze" at one point in it, Harrison Gray Otis said: "I am sorry, Mr. Chairman, to hear that gentleman make use of the word 'squeeze' when applied to taxation. It was the only inelegant word which escaped him."[1] The burden of the speech may be divined from the following passage:

"It is, Sir, by a cultivation of your militia alone that you can always be prepared for every species of attack. When citizen and soldier shall be synonymous terms, then will you be safe. When gentlemen attempt to alarm us with foreign dangers, they will permit me to advert to those of a domestic and more serious nature; they will suffer me to warn them against standing armies; against destroying the military spirit of the citizen by cultivating it only in the soldier by profession; against an institution which has wrought the downfall of every free state, and riveted the fetters of despotism; which must produce in this country effects similar to those which it has brought about in others; unless, indeed, gentlemen suppose that the same moral and physical causes which govern the Eastern world are here suspended in their operations."[2]

But the passages in this speech, which were destined to bring down serious trouble on Randolph's head, were these:

"I did hope, Sir, that our remote distance from the great disturbers of human repose would have permitted us to be exempted from those perpetual alarms, those armings and counterarmings, which have raised the national debt of Britain to its present astonishing amount, and which sends her laborers supperless to bed. This is the mischief which poisons the

[1] *A. of C.*, 1799–1801, 306. [2] *Id.*, 300.

happiness of that country; of all others, perhaps, the most blessed in point of soil, climate and position. I am friendly to the resolution on your table, Sir, on another ground. I believe that it will remove a considerable cause of irritation. . . . The military parade which meets the eye in almost every direction, excites the gall of our citizens; they feel a just indignation at the sight of loungers who live upon the public, who consume the fruits of their honest industry under the pretext of protecting them from a foreign yoke. They put no confidence, Sir, in the protection of a handful of ragamuffins; they know that, when danger comes, they must meet it and they only ask arms at your hands. Gentlemen have talked of organizing the militia. I call upon them to make good what they have said. Instead of reducing this force, I could wish to see the *whole* of it, reprobated as it is by our citizens, abandoned, and the defence of the country placed in proper hands—those of the people."[1]

The next day, Randolph rose again, and disclaiming the intention of receding from any opinions, which he had expressed the day before, he said, however, that there was one term used by him which (as no notice had been taken of it) he would exchange; "It was '*ragamuffin.*'" And, having recalled this opprobrious word, he gave himself over to another outburst of spirited declamation. The term, he declared, had been extorted from him by the character and appearance of the recruits in his country; men the most abject and worthless of the community; and yet to the protection of these men they were told to confide their liberties and independence. "Sir," he added, "we revolt from the idea. We hold those blessings in contempt of their protection. We hold them in defiance of all force, foreign or domestic; we hold them, sir, by the tenure of that valor which obtained them."[2] The use of the word "ragamuffins" was resented almost as soon as uttered by two officers of the Marine Corps, a Captain James Mc-

[1] *A. of C.*, 1799–1801, 298. [2] *Id.*, 367.

Knight and a Lieutenant Michael Reynolds. During the evening of the day, succeeding the day on which it was spoken, they came into the box at the Chestnut Street playhouse, to which Randolph and a party of friends had gone for the purpose of witnessing *The Stranger* and its after-piece *Bluebeard*, and deliberately conspired to insult him.

"They asked one another," said Randolph, in an account which he gave of the incident, "if the soldiers on the stage did not act very well for mercenaries [one of the reproachful terms used by Randolph in his speech]; said they supposed from their color (Turks) they were Virginians; squeezed into the seat with evident intention to incommode us, particularly myself; and, when we were leaving the box, gave me a twitch by the coat; but, upon the author being demanded, they had disappeared. On going down-stairs, some of the gentlemen said they tried to push us all down in mass, and, in the street, they passed with a rude quickness, jostling one of the gentlemen and striking another's foot."[1]

In another place, Randolph tells us that, until his coat was twitched, he ignored the provocations with which he had been visited, but that he, thereupon, demanded who it was that had committed the act and, receiving no answer, denounced the person guilty of it, whoever he might be, as a puppy.[2] Other witnesses said as a "damned puppy." His pride was too deeply wounded to allow the incident to end there. The very next day he addressed a letter to President Adams, narrating the indignities which he had suffered and closing in these words:

"Having stated the facts, it would be derogatory to your character for me to point out the remedy. So far as they relate to this application, addressed to you in a public capacity, they can only be supposed by you to be of a public nature.

[1] Garland, v. 1, 158.
[2] *A. of C.*, 1799–1801, 377.

It is enough for me to state that the independence of the Legislature has been attacked and the majesty of the people, of which you are the principal representative, insulted and your authority contemned. In their name, I demand that a provision, commensurate with the evil, be made, and which will be calculated to deter others from any future attempts to introduce the Reign of Terror into our country. In addressing you in this plain language of man, I give you, Sir, the best proof I can afford of the estimation in which I hold your office and your understanding; and I assure you with truth that I am with respect your fellow citizen, John Randolph.

"Chamber H. Representatives,
Jany. 11, 24th Independence."

"To the President of the U. States:"

The tone of this letter was undoubtedly a little saucy; not so much so, however, that, *mutatis mutandis*, Jefferson might not have read it with a good-natured smile or Lincoln with a guffaw, followed by an unctuous jest. Adams, however, had the keenest kind of a nose for the slightest whiff of disrespect, and was surrounded in Timothy Pickering, Oliver Wolcott, James McHenry, and Benjamin Stoddert by cabinet councilors who were grave and partisan enough to advise him that, in their opinion, the public interest required that the contemptuous language in Randolph's letter should be publicly censured, and to express the apprehension that, if such addresses to the Chief Magistrate of the nation remained unnoticed, a precedent would be established which would perforce destroy the "ancient, respectable, and urbane usages" of America. Accordingly, the day after Adams received this advice from these gentlemen above their formal signatures, he sent Randolph's letter to the House of Representatives with a message stating that, as it related to the privileges of the House, which ought, in his opinion, to be inquired into in the House itself, if anywhere, he had thought it proper to submit the whole letter and its tend-

encies to their consideration without any other comment on its matter or style.[1] The message and the letter were read, and, despite jurisdictional and other objections by Randolph and his disclaimer of a wish that the House should take measures for his protection, they were referred to a select committee, composed of seven members, headed by Chauncey Goodrich, one of the leading Federalists in the House.[2] This committee collected a considerable amount of testimony bearing upon the occurrences at the playhouse, including a letter addressed to it by Randolph, and palpably untruthful statements made by Captain McKnight and Lieutenant Reynolds; and shortly afterwards it rendered a report to the House, expressing its regret that a member of the House should have conceived himself justified in deviating from the forms of decorum, customary in official communications to the Chief Magistrate of the United States, deprecating Randolph's complaint to the President as derogatory to the rights of the House, and declaring that, as some of the circumstances, which seemed to him and others indicative of premeditated insult, had been satisfactorily explained, and some were of a nature too equivocal to warrant reprehension and punishment, the Committee was of the opinion that sufficient cause had not been shown for the interference of the House on the ground of a breach of its privileges.

The report was accompanied by two Resolutions: one voicing the respectful sense entertained by the House of the regard which the President had shown for its rights and privileges, and the other asserting that sufficient cause did not appear for the interposition of the House on the ground of a breach of its privileges.[3] The House agreed to the first Resolution, and, after a vain effort on the part of a minority of its members to amend the second so as to make it declare that the conduct of McKnight and Rey-

[1] *A. of C.*, 1799–1801, 372. [2] *Id.*, 373, 374. [3] *Id.*, 377, 504.

nolds deserved reprehension, the second was amended by the insertion in it of a clause imputing indiscretion and impropriety to the two officers; whereupon it was rejected altogether[1]; but not until what has been called the percussion and repercussion of debate had left both Randolph's supporters and enemies in a state of shockless exhaustion; for the debate, which followed the submission of the report to the House, elicited speeches from many of its members, including some of its strongest, such as James A. Bayard, Albert Gallatin, Robert Goodloe Harper, and Joseph H. Nicholson. Indeed, the discussion fell but little below the dignity of a field debate of the very first rank. All that lawyers can do to refine and explain away ugly facts or to perplex the human mind with artful doubts and uncertainties was done in this case by Bayard and his able coadjutors, who, true to the robust partisanship of the Federalists of that time, were determined to uphold, at all costs, the action of the President, and to rebuke the young parliamentary upstart who had addressed him in such froward language. And Joseph H. Nicholson and his able coadjutors, on the other hand, did not overlook in their arguments any point favorable to their friend and fellow-Republican, Randolph, who himself, in a brief but cogent speech, assailed with telling force that part of the report which charged him with conduct derogatory to the rights and privileges of the House. The wide currency obtained by the terms "mercenary" and "ragamuffin," which Randolph had applied to the regular soldier, was reflected in a statement made by Bayard that "the words in question had derived so much importance from the use the gentleman had made of them that they had become the common cant of every tavern and street in the town."[2] And that Randolph might have been drawn into consequences even more serious than those of naked insult appears in the statement of Gabriel Christie, in the course of the debate,

[1] *A. of C.*, 1799–1801, 505, 506. [2] *Id.*, 435.

that he had heard some military officers say that officers ought to be picked out one by one from the army to engage Randolph in duels until he was killed.[1]

John Marshall did not participate in the discussion, and he separated himself from his extreme Federalist associates to the extent of supporting the amendment to the second Resolution affirming that the conduct of McKnight and Reynolds had been indiscreet and improper[2]; but, if he had been invested with the judicial duty of passing upon the facts of the case, it is not difficult to imagine what he would have said. He would have pronounced the use of the words "mercenary" and "ragamuffin" by Randolph intemperate beyond the extreme limits of parliamentary license; he would have condemned Randolph's letter to the President as bumptious and wanting in the proper measure of ceremonious respect to the dignity of his high office; and, brushing aside partisan bias, sophistry, and special pleading, he would have found that McKnight and Reynolds did deliberately insult Randolph by echoing his words in various contumelious forms, crowding and jostling him and pulling at his coat, and only made their offenses against the freedom of debate and the public peace worse by trying to shield themselves behind statements marked, if not by downright lying, at least by gross equivocation and dishonest suppression of the truth. But, as it was, Randolph issued from the episode as buoyant and unharmed as a cork from the splash of a waterfall. His fluent, bright speech, the universal interest aroused by its strictures on the regular soldiery, no favorite of the American yeoman or laborer, the action of the President, the prolonged debate, all served to direct the tongues and eyes of the public towards him; and his representative character, when he uttered his inflammatory epithets, and when he was insulted for uttering them, and the disregard shown by a partisan majority, set in motion by the Chief

[1] *A. of C.*, 1799–1801, 451. [2] *Id.*, 506.

Magistrate of the nation, to convincing proofs of McKnight's and Reynolds' misconduct, held him up to the sympathy of the American public as the victim of military brutality and of executive and parliamentary tyranny. The effect of the entire flurry was to accelerate most effectively the maturity of his public reputation.

So far from being intimidated by the report of the Committee, Randolph, on the second day after it had been read and ordered to lie on the table for future discussion, offered a proposition in the form of an amendment to a pending Bill, providing for the discharge of supernumerary officers of the army.[1] The Nicholas Resolution, looking to the reduction of the regular army, was defeated after Randolph had delivered his second speech in its support[2]; and this amendment shared its fate.[3]

During the remainder of the first session of the 6th Congress, Randolph spoke quite frequently, and on a considerable variety of topics; but, unfortunately, his speeches have either not been reported at all or only imperfectly. That such should be the case is all the more to be regretted in view of the fact that, in one of his letters to Francis Scott Key, he expressed the opinion that the best speech that he ever made was one that he delivered at this period of his legislative service on the Bill to accept for the United States cession of jurisdiction over the territory west of the State of Pennsylvania, commonly called the Western Reserve of Connecticut.[4] (*a*). Often unreported in the early stages of his parliamentary career, as was true of his fellow debaters also, later he complained that the mangled limbs of Medea's children were as much like the living creations as the *disjecta membra* of his speeches resembled what he really did say.[5] (*b*) In some instances, during the first session of the 6th Congress, the legislative action of

[1] *A. of C.*, 1799–1801, 389. [2] *Id.*, 369. [3] *Id.*, 403.
[4] *Id.*, 661, 662; Garland, v. 2, 31.
[5] Feb. 17, 1814, Garland, v. 2, 32; 275.

Randolph was shaped by the overstrained scruples or the ostentatious spirit of independence which youthful legislators in "their salad days," when "green in judgment," not infrequently exhibit. He opposed, for instance, a resolution requesting the President to present to Captain Thomas Truxton a gold medal, emblematic of the action between the United States frigate *Constellation* of 58 guns and the French ship-of-war *La Vengeur* of 54 guns, only to find that there were but three other members of the House, John G. Jackson, Matthew Lyon, and Thomas Sumter, hardy enough to stand up and take with him the merciless drubbing which eighty-seven members of the House promptly administered to him.[1] He wished to be satisfied, he said, that the conduct of the gallant captain, in forcing an action with a ship of such superior force as *La Vengeur*, was not rash; especially when our Commissioners were in the capital of France at the time seeking peace.[2] On another occasion, he opposed a bill for erecting a mausoleum in honor of George Washington in the City of Washington, and again went down into the dust of discomfiture under circumstances hardly less ignominious than in the case of the Truxton Resolution.[3] It is at least to be hoped that in opposing the Washington Mausoleum proposition he was not actuated by the partisan motives of which he was suspected a few years before, when he is said to have offered at a dinner the toast: "George Washington, may he be damned!" and to have rescued himself from the critical situation which followed it either *prepense* or under the spur of the emergency by adding: "If he signs Jay's treaty."[4] But whatever may have been his feelings about Washington in that tempestuous time, subsequently he over and over again used striking language about Washington fully in keeping with the admiration and reverence universally felt for him by man-

[1] *A. of C.*, 1799–1801, 642. [2] *Id.*, 640. [3] *Id.*, 712.
[4] *J. R.*, by Adams, 25.

kind. The Bill for the mausoleum was revived at the beginning of the 2d session of the 6th Congress, and was then opposed by Nathaniel Macon, of North Carolina, in one of the most thoroughly characteristic speeches ever delivered by that cross-roads philosopher and statesman, whose career is a striking illustration of the limited extent to which provincial narrowness and rustic simplicity detract from the just influence in American public life of homespun wisdom, natural dignity, and the elementary virtues of courage, truthfulness, and honesty.[1] (*a*) A resolution for reducing the second regiment of artillery to three battalions gave Randolph his opening at the 2nd session of the 6th Congress for a neat thrust. Answering Rutledge, of South Carolina, who had said that he did not desire to drag the militia from the plough and the enjoyments of domestic felicity to carry them to the seacoast, there to confine them for long periods in forts under the pretence of a miserable economy, Randolph is reported as saying that the House had been told by a gentleman from South Carolina that, from tenderness to the militia, he would dispense with their services, but that this was a mistaken tenderness which he, Randolph, did not wish to manifest nor the militia themselves to receive. In a similar strain of affected tenderness, he declared, a Roman Emperor had excused a Roman Senate from the exercise of their legislative duties, and had informed them that, from a regard to their ease, he would pass laws for them; and that Senate had abjectly returned their thanks to the Emperor for his kindness to them; but that the speaker hoped that no similar proposition would be made to the House, nor similar answer be returned by them.[2]

In November, 1800, the Presidential election under the Federal Constitution, as it then stood, was thrown into the House of Representatives by the fact that Jefferson and Burr had received the highest and an equal number

[1] *A. of C.*, 1799–1801, 803. [2] *Id.*, 835.

of votes at the polls; and it became its duty, voting by States, with one vote for each State, to decide which of the two should be President. Technically speaking, one had no better title to the office than the other, but probably every vote cast for Burr had been cast for him as a candidate for the Vice Presidency merely. Then ensued the Federalist intrigues in behalf of Burr, the revolutionary suggestions and the fruitless ballotings which wound the public mind up to the highest point of anxious tension, and would perhaps have resulted in civil tumult and bloodshed, had the real intent of the voters been set aside. During this interval of perilous suspense, Randolph, by a series of brief notes, kept St. George Tucker fully advised as to how things were swaying in the balances of Libra at Washington; which had then become the capital of the nation.

On Feb. 11, 1801, he wrote:

"Seven times we have balloted—eight states for J—six for Burr—two, Maryland and Vermont divided; voted to postpone for an hour the process; now half past four resumed—result the same. The order against adjourning made with a view to Mr. Nicholson, who was ill, has not operated. He left his sick bed—came through a snow storm—brought his bed, and has prevented the vote of Maryland from being given to Burr. Mail closing.

"Yours with perfect love and esteem

J. R., Jr."

And, on Feb. 12th, Randolph wrote that the House had just taken its nineteenth ballot, and that on every ballot the result had invariably been the same. They continued to ballot, he said, with an intermission of an hour between ballots, and he found some satisfaction in the fact that the rule for making the sittings of the House permanent did not seem to be so agreeable as formerly to the Federalist members. There would be no election, he thought. On Feb. 14, he wrote that the balloting had been going on for

thirty-one hours, and finally on Feb. 17th that, on the thirty-sixth ballot, ten states had voted for Jefferson and four (all New England States) for Burr; that Delaware and South Carolina had cast blanks; that the four Maryland Burrites had likewise cast blanks, and that Morris of Vermont (a Federalist) had left his seat.[1] The detested, the beloved draftsman of the Declaration of Independence, therefore, was the President-elect of the United States; Randolph's kinsman, the man of all others, under whose party leadership, as kindly and sympathetic as it was firm and skillful, Randolph's political fortunes should have prospered not only brilliantly but durably. And under the Federal Constitution, as it then stood, Aaron Burr, who was to occupy a place in American History, next in point of extreme abasement to that of Benedict Arnold, its Abaddon, and angel of the bottomless pit, was the Vice President elect.

When the first session of the Seventh Congress began on Dec. 7, 1801, the Democrats were in complete control of the House of Representatives. Its initial act was to elect Nathaniel Macon its Speaker[2]; and the next day it adopted a resolution appointing a standing committee of Ways and Means

"to take into consideration all such reports of the Treasury Department and all such propositions relative to the revenue as may be referred to them by the House; to inquire into the state of the public debt, of the revenue and of the expenditures; and to report from time to time their opinion thereon."[3]

Of this highly important committee, Randolph, who had been re-elected to the House, was made Chairman[4]—a remarkable acknowledgment by the House of the impression which a young man but 28 years of age had made during two years of service on his Congressional associates and the

[1] *Life of T. J.*, by Geo. Tucker, v. 2, Appendix.
[2] *A. of C.*, 1801–03, v. 1, 310. [3] *Id.*, 312. [4] *Ibid.*

general public. Almost from the time of this appointment, and not precisely from it only because of some jealous reluctance on the part of some of his Democratic colleagues to acknowledge his superiority, is to be dated a record of parliamentary leadership which lasted approximately five years only, but was as brilliant and masterly, while it lasted, as any known to the history of Congress. Indeed, to find any ascent to such a position so rapidly achieved and so firmly maintained, while it continued, we should perhaps have to turn to the life of the younger Pitt. One of Randolph's first suggestions was that a public printer should be appointed to do all the printing required by the work of the House.[1] The next time that he rose it was for the purpose of opposing an amendment by Macon to a bill for the apportionment of Representatives among the several states, making the ratio of Congressional representation one member for every thirty thousand, instead of for every thirty-three thousand, persons, in each state. The amendment gave him an opportunity to denounce as heretical and improper the doctrine avowed in the debate that the House was composed of representatives of the people instead of the states in proportion to their numbers.[2] In his view, as he expressed it, members of the House were not the representatives of the aggregate of the people of the United States in their national capacity, but of the people of the states in their respective sovereign capacities.[3] On Jan. 4, 1802, among other resolutions, he submitted to the House one declaring that it was expedient to inquire whether any and what changes should be made in the judicial establishment of the United States.[4] Later in the session, the Resolution assumed the form of a bill for the repeal of the Act for the alteration and enlargement of the Federal Judicial System, which the Federalists had passed in the early part of 1801 for the purpose of erecting a solid breakwater against the flood of radical

[1] *A. of C.*, 336. [2] *Id.*, 341. [3] *Id.*, 368. [4] *Id.*, 362.

innovations which they believed would be released by the election to the Presidency of the great man, who had been the sleepless and powerful antagonist of their oligarchical prepossessions and centralizing policies, and who was disposed to set no limit to the capacity of Truth to take care of Error, or to his faith in the righteous instincts and the ultimate good judgment of the common mass of the American people.

"They," [the Federalists], Jefferson wrote to Jonathan Dickinson after the passage of the Judiciary Law of 1801, "have retired into the Judiciary as a stronghold. There the remains of Federalism are to be preserved and fed from the treasury, and from that battery all the works of republicanism are to be beaten down and erased."[1]

Another motive at the back of the Federalist Judiciary Act of 1801 was the desire of the Federalists to create as much patronage as possible in the form of judicial appointments for the leading adherents of a party which was about to be deprived of the spoil of political ascendancy; and so eager was this desire that John Adams kept his pen drudging at the task of making appointments until nine o'clock[2] in the evening before the inauguration of Jefferson; or, as the baffled Republicans would have it, until midnight. When the repealing bill came up for discussion, it was the subject of an earnest and protracted debate in which the thunders of all the heavy field-pieces of the House were heard. On the Republican side, William Branch Giles (*a*) of Virginia delivered an able speech; on the Federalist side James A. Bayard, the Federalist leader of the House, answered him in such an effective manner as to excite the enthusiastic admiration of John Adams.[3] Bayard in turn was answered by John Randolph in quite a lengthy speech,

[1] *Writings*, Mem. Ed., v. 10, 302.
[2] *Id.*, 241.
[3] Adams to Bayard, Apr. 10, 1802, *Bayard Papers*, Donnan, 152.

which contained some pungent and pithy observations. Its opening words affect a tone of humility, but nevertheless they illustrate abundantly the spirit of easy assurance in which he was prepared, even at the age of twenty-eight, to confront any hostile champion; albeit his height might be six cubits and a span and the staff of his spear like a weaver's beam.

"Mr. Randolph [we quote from the Annals of Congress] said that he did not rise for the purpose of assuming the gauntlet which had been so proudly thrown by the Goliath of the adverse party; not but that he believed even his feeble powers armed with the simple weapon of truth, a sling, and a stone, capable of prostrating on the floor that gigantic boaster, armed *cap-a-pie* as he was; but that he was impelled by the desire to rescue from misrepresentation the arguments of his colleague (Mr. Giles) who was now absent during indisposition. That absence, said Mr. Randolph, is a subject of peculiar regret to me, not only because I could have wished his vindication to have devolved on abler hands, but because he had today lost the triumph which yesterday he could not have failed to enjoy; that of seeing his opponents reduced to the wretched expedient of perverting and mutilating his arguments through inability to meet and answer them. Mr. Randolph said that this was the strongest proof which could be given of inadequacy to refute any position. He, therefore, left to the gentleman the victory which he had obtained over his own arguments."[1]

The Judiciary Act of 1801 was in itself a timely and truly beneficial measure, and there can be no doubt that in concocting and enacting it many of the Federalist members of Congress sincerely believed with Bayard that in the hands of the Democrats the Federal Constitution would become "the instrument of wild and dark destruction,"[2] and felt that nothing should be left undone to deprive such a terrible instrument of its murderous edge; but to a great

[1] *A. of C.*, 1801–03, v. 1, 650. [2] *Id.*, 611.

extent, too, the Act was but the offspring of the usual eagerness of a defeated party to preserve as much salvage as possible out of the general wreck of its possessions and hopes; and this fact was rendered all the more squalid by the indecorous race which John Adams had run with the clock almost down to the last moment of his official existence for the purpose of depriving the incoming party of every shred of patronage under the Act.

"He," said Giles in this debate, after referring to the section of the Federal Constitution which interdicts the appointment of any member of Congress during the time for which he was elected to any civil office of the United States created during such time, "attempted to make vacancies by what he called the promotion of judges, although they held their commissions of him 'during good behavior,' and, without waiting to know whether the judges would accept the promotion or not, upon which event alone a vacancy could accrue, he proceeded to appoint and actually commission members of the legislature to offices then actually held by other commissions granted to other persons."[1]

In other words, John Adams beat the devil around the constitutional provision by appointing existing judges to newly created judicial offices under the Act, and then filling the offices thus vacated with members of Congress who were disqualified by the Constitution from holding the newly created ones. Of course, it was not in the nature of Randolph to eschew the kind of comment which conduct like this invited. After repelling what he conceived to be misrepresentations by Bayard of what Giles had actually said, and casting a penetrating glance or so in his intuitive way into some of the principal topics developed by the debate, he met the suggestion that the repeal of the Judiciary Law of 1801 would be a hazardous precedent in this fashion:

[1] *A. of C.*, 1801–3, v. 1, 598.

"If you are precluded from passing this law lest depraved men make it a precedent to destroy the independence of your judiciary, do you not concede that a desperate faction, finding themselves about to be dismissed from the confidence of their country, may pervert the power of erecting courts to provide to an extent for their adherents and themselves? And that, however flagrant that abuse of power, it is remediless, and must be submitted to? Will not the history of all governments warrant the assertion that the creation of new and unnecessary offices as a provision for political partisans is an evil more to be dreaded than the abolition of useless ones? Is not an abuse of power more to be dreaded from those who have lost the public confidence than from those whose interest it will be to cultivate and retain it?"[1]

This was acrimonious enough, but not so exasperating as what Randolph also said a little later in the same speech:

"It is not, however, on account of the paltry expense of the new establishment that I wish to put it down. No sir, it is to give the death-blow to the pretension of rendering the judiciary an hospital for decayed politicians; to prevent the state courts from being engulfed by those of the Union; to destroy the monstrous ambition of arrogating to this House the right of evading all the prohibitions of the Constitution and holding the nation at bay."[2]

The reader, however, would be very much deceived, were he to form the idea that Randolph's activities during the sessions of 1801–03 were limited to a few clever speeches. It is not too much to say that, during these sessions, he was the working member of the House, and its most influential member in every respect. As Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, he was indefatigably diligent in the discharge of his duties; and by reason partly of the great importance of this committee, and partly of the personal prestige and leadership which its

[1] *A. of C.*, 1801–03, v. 1, 659. [2] *Id.*, 663.

headship carried along with it at that time, he had the management of most of the weightier measures which received the attention of the House during the existence of the seventh Congress; such as the Annual Appropriation Bills,[1] the bill to provide for the collection of the arrearages of the direct tax,[2] the bill to repeal the internal taxes,[3] the bill to provide for the redemption of the whole debt of the United States,[4] the bill fixing the Military Peace Establishment of the United States,[5] and the bill modifying the Act enabling the people of the Eastern division of the Territory Northwest of the River Ohio to form a constitution and a state government.[6] We find him on a single day, Dec. 17, 1802, moving both an inquiry as to whether any alterations were necessary in the legislation imposing duties on tonnage and imports,[7] and a request that the President cause to be laid before the House such papers as were in the possession of the Department of State touching violations by Spain of her treaty obligations with respect to the navigation of the Mississippi.[8]

Some interesting references to the Randolph of this period are found in the letters of William Plumer, who became a Federalist member of the Senate from New Hampshire in December, 1802. Writing to Nicholas Emery in January, 1803, he says:

"The Democratic party want an acknowledged bold and determined leader in the House. Giles is sick at home. John Randolph, a pale, meagre, ghostly man has more popular and effective talents than any other member of the party; but Smith, Nicholson, Davis, and others are unwilling to acknowledge him as their file leader."[9]

[1] *A. of C.*, 482, 1164. [2] *Id.*, 420. [3] *Id.*, 989.
[4] *Id.*, 1161, 1165, 1168, 1170, 1175.
[5] *Id.*, 1801–03, v. 1, 354. [6] *Id.*, v. 2, 544.
[7] *Id.*, 1802–03, v. 2, 281. [8] *Ibid.*
[9] *Life of Wm. Plumer*, by Wm. Plumer, Jr., 248.

Under the same date, in a letter to Jeremiah Mason, Plumer repeated his statement that Randolph had more talent than any other member of the Democratic party. "But they [the Democrats]," he declared, "are unwilling to own a leader who has the appearance of a beardless boy more than of a full grown-man."[1] In a later letter, one written to his son on Feb. 22, 1803, Plumer is not so brief. After noting the fact that the members of the House sat with their hats on—an usage which was not abandoned until many years afterwards—he gives us these interesting particulars about Randolph:

"Mr. Randolph goes to the House booted and spurred, with his whip in his hand, in imitation, it is said, of members of the British Parliament. He is a very slight man but of the common stature. At a little distance, he does not appear older than you are; but, upon a nearer approach, you perceive his wrinkles and grey hairs. He is, I believe, about thirty. He is a descendant in the right line from the celebrated Indian Princess, Pocahontas. The Federalists ridicule and affect to despise him; but a despised foe often proves a dangerous enemy. His talents are certainly far above mediocrity. As a popular speaker, he is not inferior to any man in the House. I admire his ingenuity and address; but I dislike his politics."[2]

But not more than Randolph disliked his.

The Plumer of 1803 differed very widely from the Randolph of that year, but the Plumer of 1804 was not so far removed, after all, from the separatist Randolph of the Missouri Compromise and Nullification periods. On Jan. 19, 1804, actuated by the disunion sentiment, which was then so rife in New England, he wrote to Oliver Peabody: "We have no part in Jefferson and no inheritance in Virginia. Shall we return to our homes, sit under our own vines and fig trees and be *separate from slaveholders?*"[3]

[1] *Life of Plumer*, 249. [2] *Id.*, 256.
[3] *Id.*, *supra*, 286.

Apparently in the succeeding March he had answered this question entirely to his own satisfaction; for, in that month, he wrote to Jeremiah Smith: "I fondly hope I shall live to see the righteous separated from the wicked by a geographical line."[1]

Randolph was re-elected in 1803, and the first session of the 8th Congress began on Oct. 17, 1803.[2] Among the new members, were John W. Eppes and Thomas Mann Randolph, of Virginia, Jefferson's sons-in-law, with both of whom Randolph was soon to be at daggers-drawn; and Joseph Clay, of Pennsylvania, who was to become one of his intimate friends.[3] Again Nathaniel Macon was elected Speaker,[4] and this time not Samuel Smith, of Maryland, as at the beginning of the 7th Congress,[5] but Randolph was placed at the head of the Committee which was, jointly with such committee as the Senate might appoint for the same purpose, to notify the President that the two Houses were ready for business.[6] And again Randolph was made Chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, and was given, as one of his associates, Joseph Clay, and, as another, his friend Joseph H. Nicholson,[7] who had also been a member of the Committee during the 7th Congress.[8]

One of the first acts of the House was to make Randolph chairman of a special committee appointed by it for the purpose of considering the part of the President's message which dealt with the urgent maritime questions that were then threatening a clash between the United States and foreign nations.[9]

The next day the office devolved upon him of offering a resolution expressing the feeling with which the House had received the announcement of the death of a man

[1] *Life of Plumer*, 287.
[2] *A. of C.*, 1803–05, v. 1, 369. [3] *Ibid.* [4] *Id.*, 370.
[5] *Id.*, 1801–03, v. 1, 311. [6] *Id.*, 1803–05, v. 1, 371.
[7] *Ibid.* [8] *Id.*, 1801–03, v. 1, 312. [9] *Id.*, 1803–05, v. 1, 374.

whose bias in favor of State Sovereignty and jealousy of delegated authority were hardly less decided than his own—that is Samuel Adams. The brief but pointed and happy remarks of Randolph on this occasion, when read in the spirit of the common sacrifices which all parts of our country made in the American Revolution, and again in the World War, are well calculated to dull the sensibility of every true American heart to the rancor of the long period of fraternal misconception and discord with which Randolph's career was coeval, and to make it still more feelingly responsive to the reunited aims and hopes of the present hour:

"It became the House," he said, "to cherish a sentiment of veneration for such men—since such men are rare—and to keep alive the spirit to which they owed the Constitution under which they were then deliberating. This great man, the associate of Hancock, shared with him the honor of being proscribed by a flagitious Ministry, whose object was to triumph over the liberties of their country by trampling on those of her colonies. With his great compatriot, he made an early and decided stand against British encroachment, whilst souls more timid were trembling and irresolute. It is the glorious privilege of minds of this stamp to give an impulse to a people and fix the destiny of nations."[1]

The management in the House of Representatives of the treaty by which the United States acquired Louisiana from France was largely confided to Randolph; for to the Committee of Ways and Means, of which he was Chairman, was referred so much of the treaty as related to the purchase price, and to a special committee, of which he was likewise chairman, so much of the messages of the President on the subject of the purchase as related to the occupation of the Louisiana Territory and the establishment over it of a Provisional Government.[2] So long as the

[1] *A. of C.*, 1803–05, v. 1, 378. [2] *Id.*, 488–489.

treaty was under consideration in the House, Randolph was its untiring and resourceful defender. And the speeches, in which he met the objections to its constitutionality and expediency, were among the best that he delivered as a member of the 8th Congress. Not the least of their effective features were the sallies in which he twitted his Federalist opponents with the contrast between the warmth, with which they had championed the Jay Treaty, and our national interest in the navigation of the Mississippi, and the carping spirit which they brought to the consideration of a convention that, at a small cost, made to our national domain an addition of enormous magnitude and incalculable value.[1] Instinct with good sense, too, are the views expressed by Randolph during the same Congress in regard to the proper compensation of the higher officers of the Federal Government. The occasion for their utterance was a bill, fixing the salaries of these officers.[2] Speaking on a proposition of Mr. Leib, of Pennsylvania, to make the salary of the Secretary of State thirty-five hundred dollars, instead of five thousand dollars, he used these weighty words:

"Is this policy, is it Republicanism that no man, unless of overgrown fortune, should be able to hold a high executive office in a fair way? I know there is an abundance of hunters and bidders for offices who are ready to take them on any terms, but these are not the men with which these important and dignified offices ought to be filled. . . . I beg gentlemen to attend to the nature and extent of the duties of the great offices of the Department of State and of the Treasury. . . . Do not those stations require an unblemished character, the highest talents and an unwearied assiduity to discharge their duties with benefit to the nation; and can you expect such men to accept such offices for the small sum of thirty-five hundred dollars a year, if influenced by pecuniary considerations? . . . I have always believed in public as well as in private life it is

[1] *A. of C.*, 1803–05, v. 1, 409. [2] *Id.*, 566.

sound policy to obtain the best agents, to give them enough to do and to pay them well for their services. I believe that, in a single negotiation, conducted by a Secretary of State, millions may depend upon the exercise of the discretionary power with which he is clothed. It may depend upon his answer to a foreign minister whether we shall have peace or war. There is also a vast responsibility attached to the Secretary of the Treasury."[1]

The amendment to the Federal Constitution, requiring Presidential Electors to name the persons voted for as President and Vice-President, respectively, received his cordial support.

"It is denounced," he said, "as opening an endless source of venality and intrigue. But to my mind the present system is more favorable to such mischiefs, and it is because I regard it as the death blow to all intrigue; because I do not wish Chance to preside where there ought to be Choice; because I want no blind ballot, under cover of which intrigue or corruption may take shelter, that I advocate the resolution before you."[2]

But it is in connection with the Yazoo Fraud and the impeachment of Judge Samuel Chase that the figure of Randolph dilates to its amplest proportions during the 8th Congress. To the Yazoo Fraud his attention had been directed even before he became a member of Congress; for, when he was in Georgia on the visit to his friend Joseph Bryan, of which we have spoken, the whole State was rocking with excitement over the iniquity of this monstrous fraud, and manifesting its loathing for the miscreants, who had perpetrated it, in a manner which communicated to Randolph the full contagion of its passionate violence.

Briefly, the history of the Yazoo Fraud is this: on Jan. 7, 1795, the Georgia Legislature passed a law, directing the Governor of Georgia to convey in fee simple, on behalf

[1] *A. of C.*, 1803–05, v. 1, 572. [2] *Id.*, 697.

of the State, to the individuals, who composed the four companies, known as the Georgia Company, the Georgia Mississippi Company, the Tennessee Company, and the Upper Mississippi Company, as tenants in common, more than thirty-five millions of acres of land in the fertile territory, lying between the western boundary of the present State of Georgia and the Mississippi River; all for the sum of five hundred thousand dollars, or at the price of less than one and one-half cents an acre.[1] This land was about to become even more valuable than it would otherwise have been because of the tremendous impetus that the invention of the cotton gin by Whitney had just given to cotton culture. The purchase price was duly paid and the land was duly deeded. The only defence that could have been urged, under any circumstances, in palliation of such an improvident transaction, was that Georgia was then a State of only some fifty thousand inhabitants, for the most part very indigent and unable to bear any public burdens; that the State Treasury was empty; that the militia, which had been engaged in protecting the State against the Indians, was unpaid and clamorous; and that the currency of the State had depreciated to such an extent as to be almost worthless. Moreover, the land was occupied by Indians whose titles had never been extinguished. But the sale was actually consummated under such circumstances as to deprive these considerations of all weight. In a short time, the fact transpired that every member but one of the majority by which the measure had been enacted had been bribed by gifts of money or shares in the purchasing companies to enact it.[2] Among the persons connected with the cession as lobbyists were Nathaniel Pendleton, a federal judge, William Smith, judge of the Superior Court of

[1] *Yazoo Land Companies*, by Haskins, 24.

[2] Report of the Commissioners, *Amer. State Papers*, Pub. Lands, v. 1, 132–5.

Georgia, and General James Gunn, United States Senator from Georgia.[1] Among the many non-residents of Georgia, who were also interested in the passage of the bill in one way or another, were Wade Hampton, one of the great slave and land owners of South Carolina, and James Wilson, of Pennsylvania, Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court, who had, for many years, been an active speculator in Indian lands; and who, with the consummation of the cession, became the owner of shares amounting to three-quarters of a million of acres of the territory ceded.[2] When the truth concerning the nefarious grant became fully known to the People of Georgia, they were aroused to the highest pitch of fury. One of the first persons to awake indignantly to its true character was William H. Crawford, a native of Virginia, who was then a school teacher at Augusta, but afterwards became famous in the history of the country as United States Senator, Minister to France, Secretary of the Treasury, and candidate for the Presidency.[3] Only the intercession of the members of the Legislature, who had voted against the bill, saved the malefactors, who had voted for it, from lynching.[4] From the mansions of wealthy planters and the cabins of squalid crackers alike ascended one universal roar of execration. Meetings were held all over the State for the purpose of voicing the popular rage; Senator Gunn was repeatedly burnt in effigy; and every Grand Jury in the State except two presented the passage of the law as a grievance. The final result of the commotion was the election of a new legislature which declared the flagitious measure to be null and void, and provided that all "records, documents, and deeds," connected with the fraud, should be "expunged from the face and indexes of the books of record of the State," and that

[1] *Miscellanies of Georgia*, by Chappell, 82, 83, 95.
[2] *Id.*, 94. [3] *Id.*, 87.
[4] *Georgia from the Invasion of De Soto to Recent Times*, by Harris, 130.

the enrolled law itself should be publicly burnt "in order that no trace of so unconstitutional, vile, and fraudulent a transaction other than the infamy attached to it" by the repeal itself should remain in the public offices of the State.[1] These provisions were duly carried into effect. All the records relating to the grant were cut out of the books in which they were bound up, a fire was kindled in front of the State House, and, in the presence of the members of both Houses of the Legislature, the enrolled bill, after being ceremoniously examined by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the Lower House, was delivered by the Speaker to the Clerk of the Lower House, who read its title aloud and handed it to the Messenger of the Lower House who in turn consigned it to the flames with the exclamation: "God save the State! And long preserve her rights! And may every attempt to injure them perish as these corrupt acts now do!"[2] Indeed, it is said that, inspired by the conceit that the work of destruction should be effected by nothing less than fire from an avenging heaven, James Jackson, who had surrendered his seat in the United States Senate for the purpose of becoming a member of the Georgia Legislature and leading the movement for the cancellation of the Yazoo grant, applied a sun glass to the fagots with which the bill was to be reduced to ashes.[3]

But the indignation of the people of Georgia was not more fleet-footed than the avarice of the grantees. On the same day that the Georgia Legislature enacted the law, which sought to annul the Yazoo grant, the Georgia Company deeded away eleven million acres of its holdings.[4] A single sale netted the Yazoo adventurers almost a mil-

[1] *Am. State Papers*, Pub. Lands, v. 1, 158.

[2] Report of Committee, *Hist. of Ga.*, by Stevens, v. 2, 491–492.

[3] *Id.*, *Georgia's Landmarks*, etc., by Knight, v. 1, 152; Harris, *supra*, 135; Stevens, *supra*, 492–3.

[4] Haskins, *supra*, 30.

lion dollars.[1] Three of the companies, to which the grant had been made, opened an office in Boston,[2] and their advent in that city was followed by a period of feverish speculation which was destined to bring home to more than one speculator the truth of Banquo's saying that "the earth hath bubbles as the water has." In Boston, even watchmakers, hair-dressers, and mechanics dabbled in Yazoo lands. Nowhere in the United States were the purchases from the Yazoo companies so numerous as in New England and the Middle States; but there was probably no State in the Union in which portions of the ceded territory were not disposed of by the original adventurers. Some of the earlier purchasers were, doubtless, innocent purchasers in a legal as well as moral sense, but other vendees must have been entirely cognizant of the fraud. When the news reached New England that the Georgia Legislature had passed an Act attempting to annul the Yazoo grant, it was received with widespread consternation, but soon a large number of the New England purchasers organized the New England-Mississippi Company for the purpose of protecting their interests, and obtained a legal opinion from Alexander Hamilton that the annulment, attempted by the Georgia Legislature, violated the prohibition of the Federal Constitution against the impairment of contracts.[3] Later, the State of Georgia ceded its rights over the Yazoo territory to the United States for one million two hundred and fifty thousand dollars, subject to the conditions that the National Government should extinguish all Indian titles to the territory, settle the British and Spanish claims affecting it, reserve five million acres for the purpose of quieting all other demands, and ultimately admit the territory as a State into the Union. In the prosecution of the steps, by which this result was reached, the National Government was repre-

[1] Chappell, *supra*, 109. [2] Haskins, *supra*, 29.
[3] *Case of the Georgia Sales*, by Harper, 109.

sented by a commission, composed of three members of Jefferson's cabinet, James Madison, Secretary of State, Albert Gallatin, Secretary of the Treasury, and Levi Lincoln, Attorney General. Subsequently, the commission was directed by law to investigate and report upon the claims of individuals and companies to the lands, and this action of Congress was immediately followed by an eager and resolute effort upon the part of the purchasers, especially the New England purchasers, of the lands, to induce Congress to apply a part of the five-million-acre reservation to their respective claims. Their efforts were not unsuccessful. The commission reported that the interest of the United States, the tranquillity of those who might thereafter inhabit the Yazoo territory, and various equitable considerations, which might be urged in favor of most of the existing claimants, rendered it expedient to enter into a compromise on reasonable terms[1]; and this report brought about the introduction of a measure into Congress to carry the recommendations of the commission into execution, which, however, though pertinaciously pressed in one form or another by every powerful influence that can be enlisted in behalf of selfish legislation, and though finally reinforced by the celebrated opinion of Chief Justice Marshall in the case of Fletcher *vs.* Peck,[2] holding that the rescinding act of the Georgia Legislature impaired a contract and was therefore unconstitutional and void, could never secure the complete legislative assent of Congress so long as John Randolph remained a member of that body (*a*).

At the head of the lobby maintained at Washington by the New England-Mississippi Company, was no less a person than Gideon Granger, the Postmaster General of the United States, who had participated in the land

[1] Report of the Commissioners, *Amer. State Papers*, Pub. Lands, v. 1, 132–135.

[2] 6 Cranch, 87.

schemes, connected with the controversy over the Connecticut Western Reserve; and was now charged by Randolph with using his office to procure legislation favorable to his client. So zealous was Granger that he did not even hesitate to appear upon the floor of the House and openly to solicit votes in favor of such legislation—an indecent proceeding of which Randolph took full advantage in his philippics. From the very beginning, and at every stage of the effort to obtain the assent of Congress to the recommendations of the Commissioners, Randolph assailed it with a fierce and supple energy which made him far more than a match for all his antagonists combined. In reading the following words, we almost feel as if it was his lot in the Yazoo debates to denounce wickedness as colossal as that of the worst Roman proconsuls:

"On a former occasion . . . we were told that on the same principle the sale of our Western lands might be set aside, since members of the Legislature speculated in them to a vast amount. However indecorous and reprehensible, there was a wide and material difference between the sales made by the United States and a pretended sale like this—not of a few acres, but of millions, not sections and half-sections, but of thousands of square miles, not measured by chains and perches but by circles of latitude and longitude."[1]

But the most striking of all Randolph's speeches on the Yazoo question, which have come down to us, were two which he delivered in support of a proviso, moved by Mr. Clark of Virginia, declaring that no part of the five-million-acre reserve should go to compensate the claimants under the Act of Georgia passed in 1795.[2] It is not too much to say that to find speeches equal to these it would be necessary to limit our selection to utterances which, by reason of their lofty sentiments, and vivid rhetorical form, have become parliamentary classics.

[1] *A. of C.*, 1803–5, 1111. [2] *Id.*, 1804–5, v. 2, 1023.

"Perhaps," Randolph said in the first of the two, "it may be supposed from the course which this business has taken that the adversaries of the present measure indulge the expectation of being able to come forward at a future day; not to this House, for that hope is desperate, but to the public, with a more matured opposition than it is in their power now to make. But past experience has shown them that this is one of those subjects which pollution has sanctified; that the hallowed mysteries of corruption are not to be profaned by the eye of public curiosity. No, Sir, the orgies of Yazoo speculation are not to be laid open to the vulgar gaze. None but the initiated are permitted to behold the monstrous sacrifice of the best interests of the nation on the altars of corruption. When this abomination is to be practiced, we go into conclave. Do we apply to the press, that potent engine, the dread of tyrants and of villains, but the shield of freedom and of worth? No, Sir, the press is gagged. On this subject we have a virtual sedition law; not with a specious title but irresistible in its operation, which, in the language of the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. Griswold), goes directly to its object. The demon of speculation at one sweep has wrested from the nation their best, their only, defense, and closed every avenue of information. But a day of retribution may yet come. If their rights are to be bartered away, and their property squandered, the people must not, they shall not, be kept in ignorance by whom or for whom it is done.

"We have often heard of party spirit, of caucuses, as they are termed, to settle legislative questions; but never have I seen that spirit so visible as at this time. The out-of-door intrigue is too palpable to be disguised. When it was proposed to abolish a judiciary system, reared in the last moments of an expiring administration, the detested off-spring of a midnight hour; when the question of repeal was before this House, it could not be taken up until midnight in the third or fourth week of the discussion. When the great and good man [Jefferson] who now fills, and who (whatever may be the wishes of our opponents) I hope and trust will long fill, the Executive Chair, not less to his own honor than to the happiness of his fellow-citizens, when he, Sir, recommended the repeal of the

internal taxes, delay succeeded delay, and discussion was followed by discussion, until patience itself was worn threadbare. But now, when public plunder is the order of the day, how are we treated? Driven into the committee of the whole, and out again in a breath by an inflexible majority, exulting and stubborn in their strength, a decision must be had *instanter*. The advocates for the proposed measure feel that it will not bear a scrutiny; hence this precipitancy. They wince from the touch of examination, and are willing to hurry through a painful and disgraceful discussion. . . . As if animated by one spirit, they perform all their evolutions with the most exact discipline, and march in a firm phalanx directly up to their object. Is it that men combined to effect some evil purpose, [and] acting on [a] previous pledge to each other, are ever more in unison than those who, seeking only to discover truth, obey the impulse of that conscience which God has placed in their bosoms? . . .

"It is alleged by the memorialists, who style themselves the agents of that company [the New England-Mississippi Co.], that they, and those whom they represent, were innocent purchasers; in other words, ignorant of the corruption and fraud by which the Act from which their pretended title was derived was passed. I am well aware that this fact is not material to the question of any legal or equitable title which they may set up, but, as it has been made a pretext for exciting the compassion of the Legislature, I wish to examine into the ground upon which this allegation rests. Sir, when that Act of stupendous villainy was passed in 1795, attempting under the forms and semblance of law to rob unborn millions of their birthright and inheritance, and to convey to a band of unprincipled and flagitious men a territory more extensive and, beyond comparison, more fertile than any state of this Union, it caused a sensation scarcely less violent than that produced by the passage of the Stamp Act, or the shutting up of the Port of Boston; with this difference, that, when the Port Bill of Boston passed, her Southern brethren did not take advantage of the forms of law by which a corrupt Legislature attempted to defraud her of the bounty of nature; they did not speculate on the necessities and wrongs of their abused and insulted coun-

try-men. I repeat that this infamous act was succeeded by a general burst of indignation throughout the Continent. This is matter of public notoriety, and . . . those, who affect to have been ignorant of any such circumstance, I shall consider as guilty of gross and wilful prevarication. They offer, indeed, to virtue, the only homage which she is ever likely to receive at their hands—the homage of their hypocrisy."[1]

Then, after referring to executive and legislative action, which, he contended, also put the memorialists upon notice of the fraud, Randolph went on:

"With what face could the President recommend or Congress endeavor to obtain from Georgia a cession of the whole or any part of the land within her Indian boundaries, if they believed that the land in question had been conveyed to others by a fair and bona fide sale; if they attached to the Act of January, 1795, any idea of validity? The man, who answers this objection, shall have my thanks. . . . Sanction the claim of this company, or any other derived from the Act of 1795, and what in effect do you declare? You record a solemn acknowledgment that Congress has unfairly and dishonestly obtained from Georgia a grant of land, to which that State no longer possessed a title, having previously sold it to others for a valuable consideration, of which transaction Congress was at the time fully apprized. Are you prepared to make this humiliating confession? To identify yourselves with the swindlers of 1795? To acknowledge that you have unfairly obtained from another that to which you know he had no title? . . . The agents of the New England Land Company are unfortunate in two points. They set out with a formal endeavor to prove that they are entitled to their proportion of fifty millions of acres of land under the law of 1795; and this they make their plea to be admitted to a proportional share of five. If they really believed what they say, would they be willing to commute a good legal or equitable claim for one-tenth of its value? . . .

"The present case presents a monstrous anomaly, to which

[1] *A. of C.*, 1804–05, v. 2, 1024.

the ordinary and narrow maxims of municipal jurisprudence ought not to be, and cannot be, applied. It is from great first principles, to which the patriots of Georgia so gloriously appealed, that we must look for aid in such extremity. Yes, extreme cases like this call for extreme remedies. They bid defiance to palliatives, and it is only from the knife, or the actual cautery, that you can expect relief. There is no cure short of extirpation. Attorneys and judges do not decide the fate of empires."[1]

Then, like a true lawyer, coming back with a bound to a clinching point in his case, Randolph broke out into these questions:

"What, Sir, would you say to a pretender to your estate who after laying claim to the whole of it, and writing a volume of arguments (if I may so abuse the term as to apply it to the sophisticated trash which I hold in my hand), in support of his pretensions, should make it the groundwork of a proposal to receive a seventh or a tenth part of what he declared himself legally and equitably entitled to, and should at the same time affirm that you were 'bound in honor' to accede to his modest, considerate and generous proposition? Would you not scout him from your presence as a swindler, as a disturber of the peace of society, or would you be trepanned by his artifice or bullied by his effrontery out of your property?"[2]

And then, to change our simile, like some lithe and powerful denizen of the jungle, Randolph, with a single leap, sank his fangs deeply into Granger's throat:

"The Government of the United States, on a former occasion, did not, indeed, act in this firm and decided manner, but those were hard, unconstitutional times which ought never to be drawn into precedent. The first year that I had the honor of a seat in this House, an Act was passed of a nature not altogether unlike the one now proposed.* I allude to the case of the Connecticut Reserve, by which the nation was swindled out of

[1] *A. of C.*, 1804–05, v. 2, 1027–1030. [2] *Id.*, 1031.

three or four million acres of land, which, like other bad titles, had fallen into the hands of innocent purchasers. When I advert to the applicants by whom we were then beset, I find that, among them, was one of the very persons, who style themselves agents of the New England-Mississippi Land Co., who seems to have an unfortunate knack at buying bad titles. His gigantic grasp embraces with one hand the shores of Lake Erie and stretches with the other to the Bay of Mobile. Millions of acres are easily digested by such stomachs. Goaded by avarice, they buy only to sell and sell only to buy. The retail trade of fraud and imposture yields too small and slow a profit to gratify their cupidity. They buy and sell corruption in the gross, and a few millions more or less is hardly felt in the account. The deeper the play, the greater their zest for the game; and the stake which it set upon their throw is nothing less than the patrimony of the people. Mr. Speaker, when I see the agency that has been employed on this occasion, I must own that it fills me with apprehension and alarm. This same agent is at the head of an executive department of our Government, subordinate indeed in rank and dignity, and in the ability required for its superintendence, but inferior to none in the influence attached to it. . . . This officer . . . having an influence which is confined to no quarter of the country . . . with offices in his gift among the most lucrative, and at the same time the least laborious or responsible, under the government . . . this officer presents himself at your bar, at once a party and an advocate. Sir, when I see this tremendous patronage brought to bear upon us, I do confess that it strikes me with consternation and dismay. Is it come to this? Are heads of executive departments of the government to be brought into this House, with all the influence and patronage attached to them, to extort from us now what was refused at the last session of Congress? I hope not, Sir, but, if they are, and, if the abominable villainy, practiced upon and by the Legislature of Georgia in 1795, is now to be glossed over, I, for one, will ask what security they by whom it shall be done can offer for their reputations better than can be given for the character of that Legislature. I will pin myself upon this text, and preach upon it as long as I have life. If no other

reason can be adduced but a regard for our own fame, if it were only to rescue ourselves from this foul imputation, this weak and dishonorable compromise ought to receive a prompt and decisive rejection. Is the voice of patriotism lulled to rest that we no longer hear the cry against an overbearing majority determined to put down the Constitution and deaf to every proposition of compromise? Such were the dire forebodings, to which we have been compelled heretofore to listen, but, if the enmity of such men be formidable, their friendship is deadly destruction; their touch pollution. What is the spirit against which we now struggle, and which we have vainly endeavored to stifle? A monster generated by fraud, nursed in corruption, that, in grim silence, awaits his prey. It is the spirit of Federalism, that spirit which considers the many as made only for the few; which sees in Government nothing but a job; which is never so true to itself as when false to the nation!"[1]

In his second speech, in support of Clark's proviso, Randolph was, if anything, still bitterer. In this first speech, he chastised the Yazoo claimants with whips; now he chastised them with scorpions; nor did he fail to lay his lash heavily across the back of the Committee on Claims, which had brought in a report favorable to the claimants,[2] to which the proviso had been offered as an amendment:

"The facts which I am about to mention," he said, "are derived from such a source that I could almost pledge myself for their truth. When the agent of the Georgia-Mississippi Co. (under whom the New England Land Company claimed) arrived in the Eastern States, he had great difficulty in disposing of his booty. The rumor of the fraud, by which it was acquired, had gone before him. People did not like to invest their money in this new Mississippi scheme. He accordingly applied to some leading men of wealth and intelligence offering to some as high as 200,000 acres; to others less, for which they were neither to pay money nor pass their paper, but were to

[1] *A. of C.*, 1804–05, v. 2, 1031. [2] *Id.*, 1022.

stand on his books as purchasers at so much per acre. These were the decoy birds to bring the ducks and geese into the net of speculation. On the faith of these persons, under the idea that men of their information would not risk such vast sums without some prospect of return, others resolved to venture, and gambled in this new land fund, laid out their money in the Yazoo lottery, and have drawn blanks. And these, Sir, are the innocent purchasers by whom we are beset; purchasers without price, who never paid a shilling and never can be called upon for one; the vile panders of speculation. And in what do their dupes differ from the losers in any other gambling or usurious transaction? The premium was proportioned to the risk. As well may your buyers and sellers of stock, your bulls and your bears of the alley, require indemnification for their losses at the hands of the Nation. There is another fact too little known but unquestionably true in relation to this business. This scheme of buying up the Western Territory of Georgia did not originate there. It was hatched in Philadelphia and New York (and I believe Boston; of this however I am not positive), and the funds with which it was effected were principally furnished by monied capitalists in those towns. The direction of these resources devolved chiefly on the Senator who has been mentioned [Senator Gunn of Georgia]. Too wary to commit himself to writing, he and his associates agreed upon a countersign. His re-election to the Senate was to be considered as evidence that the temper of the Legislature of Georgia was suited to their purpose, and his Northern confederates were to take their measures accordingly. In proof of this fact, no sooner was the news of his re-appointment announced at New York than it was publicly said in a coffee-house there: 'Then the Western Territory of Georgia is sold.' Does this require a comment? Do you not see the strong probability that many of those who now appear in the character of purchasers from the original grantees named in the act of 1795 are in fact partners, perhaps instigators and prime movers of a transaction in which their names do not appear? Amidst such a complication of guilt how are you to discriminate; how fix the Proteus? The chairman of the Committee on Claims who brought in this report, [and] under the lash of

whose criticism we have all so often smarted that he is generally known as the pedagogue of the House, will give me leave on this subject to refer him to an authority. It is one with which he is no doubt familiar, and, however humble, well-disposed to respect. The authority, which I am about to cite, is Dillworth's Spelling Book, and, if it will be more grateful to the gentleman, not our common American edition, but the Royal English Spelling Book. In one of the chapters of that useful elementary work, it is related that two persons, going into a shop on pretense of purchase, one of them stole a piece of goods and handed it to the other to conceal under his cloak. When challenged with the theft, he who stole it said he had it not, and he who had it said he did not take it. 'Gentlemen,' replied the honest tradesman, 'what you say may all be very true, but, at the same time, I know that between you I am robbed'; and such precisely is our case. But I hope, Sir, we shall not permit the parties, whether original grantees, who took it, or subsequent purchasers, who have it, to make off with the public property. The rigor of the Committee on Claims has passed into a proverb. It has more than once caused the justice of this House to be questioned. What then was our surprise, on reading their report, to find that they have discovered 'equity' in the pretensions of these petitioners? Sir, when the war-worn soldier of the Revolution, or the desolate widow and famished offspring of him who sealed your independence with his blood, ask at the door of that committee for *bread*, they receive the Statute of Limitation. On such occasions, you hear of no equity in the case. Their claims have not the stamp and seal of iniquity upon them. *Summum jus* is the measure dealt out to them. The equity of the committee is reserved for those claims which are branded with iniquity and stamped with infamy. This reminds me of the story of a poor, distressed female in London applying for admittance into the Magdalen Charity. Being asked who she was, her wretched tale was told in a few words. 'I am poor, innocent, and friendless.' 'Unhappy girl,' replied the director, 'your case does not come within the purview of this institution. Innocence has no admission here; this is a place of reception for prostitutes; you must go and qualify your-

self before you can partake of our relief.' With equal discretion, the directors of the Committee on Claims suffer nothing to find support in their asylum but what is tainted with corruption and stamped with fraud. Give it these properties and they will give it 'equity'. . . . This Government, let me remind you, has acquired the confidence of the public by the disinterestedness of its measures. The repeal of the internal taxes is not the least conspicuous among them. How long will you retain that well-earned confidence, if you lavish on a band of speculators a landed capital whose annual interest is more than equivalent to the whole proceeds of those taxes? I will not go into petty details now, but I pledge myself that whoever makes the calculation will find the value of the land, together with the expense of extinguishing the Indian title, at the rate of our last treaty in that quarter, to yield a clear, perpetual annuity equal to the receipt from the internal taxes. What would you say to a proposition to revive those taxes and mortgage them for the payment of the interest on a Yazoo stock? Do you wonder that we shrink from such a precipice? Shall a Republican House of Representatives sanction this wanton waste of the public resources to nourish the bane of every republic? Are you simple enough to believe that the five millions will quiet them? Yes, as the tribute of the Roman world satisfied their barbarian enemies. You only whet their appetite, and increase their means for extorting more. Like the Gauls after the sack of Rome, they will make their second attempt upon the Capitol before they have divided the plunder acquired in the first. When I see the formidable front displayed by this band of broken speculators, I am irresistibly impelled to inquire what would have been their force, if their attempt on the Western Country of Georgia had not been baffled by the virtue and patriotism of the State? What is there in this Government that could have coped with them? Sir, you must have built another wing to your Capitol for the third branch of your Legislature. You would have had a Yazoo estate in your empire, not with a qualified negative but an absolute veto on all your proceedings. Scarcely would they have left you the initiative.

. . . . . .

"Sir, I well recollect, when first I had the honor of a seat in this House, we were members then of a small minority; a poor, forlorn hope; that this very petitioner appeared in Philadelphia, on behalf of another great land company on Lake Erie. He then told us, as an inducement to vote for the Connecticut Reserve (as it was called), that, if that measure failed, it would ruin the Republicans and the cause in that state. You, Sir, cannot have forgotten the reply he received: 'That we did not understand the Republicanism that was to be paid for; that we feared it was not of the right sort but spurious.' And, having maintained our principles through the ordeal of that day, shall we now abandon them to act with the men and upon the maxim which we then abjured? Shall we now condescend to means which we disdained to use in the most desperate crisis of our political fortune? This is indeed the age of monstrous coalitions, and this corruption has the quality of cementing the most inveterate enmities, personal as well as political. It has united in close concert those of whom it has been said, not in the figurative language of prophecy, but in the sober narrative of history; 'I have bruised thy head and thou hast bruised my heel.' Such is the description of persons who would present to the President of the United States an act to which, when he puts his hand, he signs a libel on his whole political life. But he will never tarnish the unsullied lustre of his fame; he will never sanction the monstrous position (for such it is, dress it up as you will) 'that a legislator may sell his vote, and a right, which cannot be divested, will pass under such sale.' Establish this doctrine, and there is an end of representative government; from that moment Republicanism receives its death blow.

"The feeble cry of Virginian influence and ambitious leaders is attempted to be raised. If such insinuations were worthy of reply, I might appeal to you, Mr. Speaker, for the fact that no man in this House (yourself perhaps excepted) is oftener in a minority than I am. If by a leader be meant one who speaks his opinion freely and boldly; who claims something of that independence, of which the gentleman from New York [Mr. Root] so loudly vaunts; who will not connive at public robbery, be the robbers whom they may, then the imputation

may be just; such is the nature of my ambition; but, in the common acceptation of the word, nothing can be more false. In the coarse language of the proverb, "'Tis the still sow that sucks the draff.' No, Sir, we are not the leaders. There they sit, and well they know it, forcing down our throats the most obnoxious measures. Gentlemen may be silent but they shall be dragged into public view. If they direct our councils, at least let them answer for the result. We will not be responsible for their measures. If we do not hold the reins, we will not be accountable for the accidents which may befall the carriage.

"But, Sir, I am a denunciator! Of whom? Of the gentlemen on my left? Not at all; but of those men and their principles whom the people themselves have denounced: on whom they have burnt their indelible curse deep and lasting as the lightning of heaven. But you are told not to regard such idle declamation. I would remind the gentleman from New York [Mr. Root] that, if to declaim be not to reason, so neither is it to be argumentative to be dull. Warmth is the creature of the heart not of the head. A position in itself just can lose no part of its truth from the manner in which it is uttered, whether by the dryest and most stupid special pleader, or bellowed with the lungs of a stentor. Are our opponents ashamed of their cause that they devolve its defence on the little ones by whom we are beset? Mr. Speaker, I had hoped that we should not be content to live upon the principal of our popularity; that we should go on to deserve the public confidence, and the disapprobation of the gentlemen over the way. But, if everything is to be reversed, if official influence is to become the handmaid of private interest, if the old system is to be revived with the old men, or any that can be picked up, I may deplore the defection but never will I cease to stigmatize it."[1]

In weighing the full significance of these speeches, it should be remembered that they were delivered before the Supreme Court of the United States, speaking through Chief Justice Marshall, had decided that the repealing act passed by the Georgia Legislature was unconstitu-

[1] *A. of C.*, 1804–5; v. 2, 1102–07.

tional, and declared *obiter* that it might well be doubted whether it was competent for the courts to set aside legislation on the ground that it was begotten by corrupt inducements. The case, therefore, was one in which the attitude of the individual member of the House of Representatives towards the recommendations of the Committee on Claims was free to be determined mainly by the extent to which he was able to respond to the purest and highest motives to legislative action. In reading the attacks made by Randolph on the Yazoo grant, it is impossible not to feel the glow of his kindling imagination and fine moral passion; but, along with it, is communicated to the reader the inevitable reflection that, constituted as is the perplexing web of conflicting facts and considerations, in which most questions of justice and expediency are entangled, constricted as is the freedom of the parliamentary leader in dealing with ideal conceptions and standards of duty by the pressure of practical necessities and importunities, it was impossible for a man to continue to be the master of the House of Representatives, who unfalteringly opposed a compromise in a dubious controversy, approved by a Commission, composed of three members of the Presidential Cabinet (to say nothing of the fact that two of them were such able and upright men as James Madison and Albert Gallatin), held up to scorn the House Committee on Claims, because it reached the same conclusion as they, and ignored the fact that the Yazoo claimants had not only won the general support of the Federalist members of the House but that of some of the most influential members of his own party; and that the whole tendency of his speeches was to affix a stigma to every man who countenanced the compromise in any manner or degree. As has been said in kindred terms of similar conduct in relation to war, the conduct of Randolph in this instance was magnificent; but it was not Political Leadership. Under the circumstances, the fiery invective that he ex-

haled against the Yazoo conspirators and the Committee on Claims could not fail to scorch the garments and to irritate the skin of the President, Madison, and Gallatin, as well as of some of the leading Democratic members of the House from the Middle States and New England, and of many other powerful individuals, whom no person, aspiring to the leadership of his party in the House, could afford lightly to affront. After the debate on the Clark proviso, the loss of leadership in the House by Randolph was, in our opinion, simply a question of time. Gideon Granger, of course, was enraged by the assaults upon him, and openly declared that he or Randolph must fall. He was understood to mean that he would challenge Randolph to a duel, and someone remarked that the latter would not be backward in answering a call of that sort. "No," replied Granger, "not in that way. I mean as a public man—as a political character." After the adjournment of the 8th Congress, he made a tour of the New England States for the purpose of organizing a party to pull down Randolph. His efforts were attended with a considerable degree of success, and Barnabas Bidwell, of Massachusetts, was the person upon whom the malcontents agreed to confer the mantle of leadership in their movement.[1]

But the intrepid stand taken by Randolph against the Yazoo claimants made a profound impression upon the general popular mind, which was well expressed by one of the leading journals of the time.

"If some members of Congress," it said, "are to be bribed with postoffice contracts to obtain their votes for a nefarious speculation on the one hand, and, if a member of Congress, superior to all corruption and all pollution or dishonor, is to be pulled down; and the offices of government are to be employed to such ends; it is vain to pretend that Republican government can stand, if such corruption and such corrupt men are suffered to retain all the power which they prostitute; and if men of

[1] Garland, v. 1, 205.

virtue, honor, talents, and integrity are to be made victims of intrigue, bottomed on such corruption."[1]

Especially in Virginia, was Randolph's course rewarded with marked approbation.

By the *Richmond Enquirer*, edited by the celebrated Thomas Ritchie, the Yazoo fraud and compromise were denounced as a "stupendous scheme of plunder."[2] And in a private conversation with John Quincy Adams William B. Giles told him that "Mr. Jefferson himself would lose an election in Virginia, if he was known to favor" the compromise.[3]

If it is true, as the elder Charles Francis Adams thought, that the Virginia school of statesmanship was too abstract in its attitude towards public issues, it cannot be denied that the Yazoo debates suggest a nice question as to whether such a turn of mind is not fully as venial as that of being too practical.[4]

The impeachment of Samuel Chase, in which Randolph was the Chief Manager on behalf of the House of Representatives, was, like the impeachment of John Pickering, Judge of the District Court for the District of New Hampshire, in which he was also a Manager, during the same Congress,[5] one of the ebullitions of the angry feud between the Federalists and the Democrats, which, though inflamed at the time by violent prejudices of many sorts, is traced by a fair-minded and patriotic reader to-day with no feeling but one of gratification that, in the formative period of our national history, the centripetal force of Federalism should have found an effective countercheck in the centrifugal force of democracy; and the centrifugal force of democracy an equally effective countercheck in the centripetal force of Federalism. But that the Pickering and Chase impeach-

[1] Garland, v. 1, 205. [2] Oct. 7, 1806.
[3] *Memoirs of J. Q. A.*, v. 1, 343.
[4] *Works of John Adams*, v. 6, 446.
[5] *A. of C.*, 1803–5, v. 1, 796.

ments were only parts of a deliberate and systematic plan to oust John Marshall and his associates from the bench of the Supreme Court of the United States, is an idea much more readily stated upon the strength of Federalist animosities and suspicions than proved. Certainly, if such a plan ever existed, Randolph was not privy to it, so far as Marshall was concerned; for, repeatedly, as one of the Managers of the Chase impeachment, he took occasion to express the profound admiration which he entertained—as a matter of fact, until the last hour of his life—for the truly great and good man whose normal mind and kind generous heart never experienced any difficulty in making the proper allowances for Randolph's mental and moral infirmities.[1]

The Chase trial, of course, lacked the ancient setting, the ceremonious dignity and splendor and the vast volume of accusatory wrong-doing and misery which belonged to the impeachment of Warren Hastings. But, under the stimulus of factious passions and the general feelings aroused by the spectacle of a venerable signer of the Declaration of Independence, and an Associate Justice of the highest court in the land arraigned before the Federal Senate upon charges, involving everything except life itself that a human being should hold dear, even the simple Republican conditions that surrounded the Chase trial assumed a highly impressive aspect. To Samuel H. Smith, one of the reporters, who took down the proceedings in the case, we are indebted for a detailed description of the manner in which they were staged. The Senate chamber was fitted up in a style of appropriate elegance; benches, covered with crimson on each side, and in a line with the chair of the presiding officer, were assigned to the members of the Senate; on the right, and in front of the chair, was a box set apart for the Managers; and on the left was a similar box for the use of Judge Chase and his counsel and

[1] *Trial of Sam'l Chase*, reported by Smith and Lloyd, v. 1, 120; v. 2, 465.

chairs for the use of such friends of his as he might wish to have admitted to the chamber. The residue of the floor was occupied by chairs for the accommodation of the members of the House of Representatives and by boxes for the reception of foreign ministers and civil and military officers of the United States. On the right and left of the chair, at the ends of the benches, assigned to the members of the Court, were boxes for the stenographers. The permanent gallery was thrown open to the public indiscriminately. Below this gallery, and above the floor of the House, was erected another gallery fitted up with peculiar elegance, which was intended primarily for the use of the ladies; but this feature of the arrangement was at an early period of the trial abandoned; it having been found impracticable to keep the sexes from commingling. At each end of the new gallery, were boxes reserved for the ladies attached to the families of public characters. The preservation of order was entrusted to the Marshal of the District of Columbia and his deputies.[1]

From day to day, the proceedings were followed with intense interest by an audience, largely composed of ladies dressed in the height of fashion, which gathered in the chamber in a dense throng on the day when the final vote was taken on the Articles of Impeachment, under circumstances of the utmost solemnity, and listened to the poll of the Senators with the profoundest interest and anxiety.

Over the proceedings presided the Vice-President Aaron Burr, whose conspicuous station, regular features, and elegant person would have made him an object of universal curiosity, even if he had not been credited with many *bonnes fortunes*, and had not recently killed Alexander Hamilton in a duel—an act for which he still stood indicted in two States. His conduct, after the beginning of the trial, though he excited some resentment by testily scolding members of the Senate for not holding longer

[1] *Chase Trial*, v. 1, 22.

sessions or for walking between him and the Managers, or for munching apples or cake during the trial,[1] was distinguished by ability and impartiality. When Judge Chase first appeared in the case, Burr, who was declared by a newspaper of the day to have conducted the trial with "the dignity and impartiality of an angel, but with the rigor of a devil,"[2] insisted upon the English rule which denied a prisoner the privilege of sitting when on trial, and ordered a chair, which the Sergeant-at-arms had brought forward for Judge Chase's comfort, to be taken away; but, upon the Judge's request, he recalled his command and allowed him to be seated.[3] "We are, indeed, fallen on evil times," groaned Senator Plumer. "The high office of President is filled by an infidel, that of Vice-President by a murderer."[4]

The figure, however, upon which all eyes were fixed was, of course, that of Judge Chase himself. More than six feet in height, with a large head whitened by the lapse of sixty-one years, a broad, brownish red face, wide, thick shoulders, and a trunk overnourished by generous living, he easily filled any eye that might be bent upon him[5]; and, around him, and prepared to defend him with every resource, known to professional learning, ingenuity, and eloquence was a group of most remarkable lawyers; Joseph Hopkinson, of Pennsylvania, whose fame should be shifted from such a dubious prop as the authorship of *Hail Columbia* to his eminent professional standing; Philip Barton Key, of Maryland, a lawyer worthy of a high place even in the history of that nursing-mother of great lawyers; Robert Goodloe Harper (*a*), a native of Virginia, who, as a member of the House of Representatives from South Carolina, and of the United States

[1] Plumer Diary, Jan. 2, Feb. 8 and 12, 1805; Plumer MSS., Libr. Cong.
[2] Davis, v. 2, 360.
[3] *Life of Plumer*, 330–331. [4] *Id.*, 329.
[5] *Signers of the Dec. of Independence*, by Dwight, 245–52.

Senate from Maryland became one of the most prominent public men of his time, and was also one of the leaders of the Maryland Bar; Charles Lee, of Virginia, the Attorney General of the United States under the administration of President Adams (*a*), and Luther Martin, a slovenly, coarse, drunken man, and, at times, a very prolix and tedious speaker,[1] but, in amplitude of professional knowledge, in legal acumen, and in the combination of knock-down and drag-out characteristics of mind and temper which made up the masterful trial lawyer of the early bellicose, gladiatorial type, so conspicuous that, when stricken by paralysis in the old age, which he reached in defiance of every law prescribed by physical health, the General Assembly of Maryland imposed a tax of five dollars upon every member of the Maryland Bar for his support.[2] To meet this cluster of celebrated lawyers, the House of Representatives put forward seven Managers; John Randolph, who was not a practising lawyer at all, and had hardly studied law long enough to learn the difference between a contract and a tort; Cæsar A. Rodney, of Delaware; Joseph H. Nicholson, of Maryland; Peter Early, of Georgia; John Boyle, of Kentucky; Christopher Clark, of Virginia; and G. W. Campbell, of Tennessee[3]; lawyers, it is true, and, in some instances, lawyers not without repute; but, in the aggregate, wholly outmatched by the antagonists whom they were elected to confront. The articles under which Judge Chase was impeached were eight in number, and resolved themselves into the charges that he had withheld legal rights from John Fries, when the latter was tried for treason on account of his part in the Whiskey Insurrection, to which he was entitled; that he had in different respects been guilty of partiality, intemperance, injustice, and op-

[1] *Life of Roger B. Taney*, by Sam'l Tyler, 67.

[2] *McGould, Great Am. Lawyers* (Lewis), v. 2, 3–46; H. P. Goddard *Md. Hist. Soc. Fund, Pub.* No. 24; *Law Review*, v. 1, 279.

[3] *A. of C.*, 1803–5.

pression in connection with the trial of James Thompson Callender, when accused of libelling John Adams; and that his relations to Grand Juries, first at Newcastle, Delaware, and later at Baltimore, had been marked by political partisanship.[1]

A majority of the Senators found Judge Chase "guilty" under three of the eight articles; under one article he was unanimously found "not guilty," and under the remaining four articles he was found "not guilty" by a majority of two in one instance, and of twenty-six in another and of fourteen in each of two other instances. Under no article, therefore, was he found "guilty" by a two-thirds vote of the Senators present, as required by the Federal Constitution. Hence Burr was compelled to declare that Samuel Chase, Esquire, stood acquitted of all the articles exhibited by the House of Representatives against him.[2]

That Judge Chase richly deserved conviction under more than one of the articles we entertain no doubt, and the majority might well have gone further and found him guilty on one or more articles in addition to the three under which they did find him "guilty." The testimony adduced before the Senate shows that he was an unfeeling, bigoted partisan, without any proper sense of judicial impartiality or decorum (*a*); and the admissions in his answer, and the observations of his Federalist contemporaries show also that, when the proceedings against him commenced, neither he nor his party friends had much confidence in the strength of his defenses. Plumer, Bayard, and Pickering[3] all anticipated his conviction, though professing to rest their forebodings on other grounds than his guilt.

[1] *Chase Trial*, v. 1, 5. [2] *Id.*, v. 2, 493.

[3] Plumer to Cogswell, Jan. 4, 1805, Plumer MSS., Libr. Cong.; Plumer to Sheafe, Jan. 9, 1805, *Id.*; Bayard to Harper, Jan. 30, 1804, *Bayard Papers*, Donnan, 160; Pickering to Lyman, Mar. 14, 1804; Lodge's *Cabot*, 450; also *N. E. Federalism* by H. Adams, 359.

"Our public . . . will be as tame as Mr. Randolph can desire," said Fisher Ames, "You may broil Judge Chase and eat him, or eat him raw; it shall stir up less anger or pity than the Six Nations would show if Corn-Planter or Red Jacket were refused a belt of wampum."[1]

That Judge Chase was not convicted, was due to the fact that the thick and thin Federalists in the Senate were as blindly determined to find him "not guilty" as most of the Democrats in the Senate were determined to find him "guilty"; to the fact that the more scrupulous and fair-minded Federalists in the Senate saw in his impeachment an intent to revolutionize the entire Supreme Court; and to the fact that enough Democratic Senators, to save him from conviction, cherished the conscientious belief that it was better to tolerate the misconduct of a single learned and able Judge, and aged Revolutionary patriot, into which, no matter how indecorous or partisan, no ingredient of corruption had entered, than by his conviction to spread abroad yet more widely the radical spirit which was undermining in the popular breast the old conservative sentiment of respect for the judicial office.

The views that we have expressed in regard to the weight of the evidence in the Chase trial have been formed notwithstanding the fact that we do not hesitate to say that, in our judgment, any impeachment that would really have led to the removal of Chief Justice Marshall, and have arrested the powerful series of judicial opinions from his pen, which did so much to invigorate all the organs of Federal authority, and to promote our national unity, would have been a thing to be deplored fully as much as if there had been a successful consummation of the Conway Cabal against the leadership of Washington during the Revolutionary War.

Randolph was the real Democratic protagonist in the

[1] Ames to Dwight, Jan. 20, 1805, Ames, 1, 328.

Chase impeachment. Of his first speech, John Quincy Adams says in his *Memoirs* only that Mr. Randolph, Chairman of the Managers, in a speech of about an hour and a half, opened the cause on the part of the House in support of the eight Articles.[1] Of Randolph's second speech, however, when his feelings had been worked up to the highest point by the heated controversy over the Articles, not one of which evoked from his intensely partisan nature any response but that of "not guilty," he gives this highly colored description:

"On the reopening of the Court, he [Randolph] began a speech of about two hours and a half with as little relation to the subject matter as possible; without order, connection or argument; consisting, altogether, of the most hackneyed commonplaces of popular declamation, mingled up with panegyrics and invectives upon persons; with a few well-expressed ideas, a few striking figures, much distortion of face and contortion of body, tears, groans and sobs; with occasional pauses for recollection and continual complaint of having lost his notes."[2] (*a*)

Of the first speech Dr. Manasseh Cutler, a member of the House at the time, remarks in his diary, "Randolph made his speech, nothing great. Closed with much spitefulness"[3]; and, in a letter to the Rev. Dr. Dana, he termed the speech a "feeble" one.[4] Of the second speech Dr. Cutler remarks in his diary: "Then Randolph began, and spoke about 3½ hours—an outrageous, infuriated declamation which might have done honor to Marat or Robespierre."[5] Of the second speech Plumer, at the time a member of the Senate, wrote to his wife: "His (Randolph's) speech was devoid of argument, method, or consistency, but was replete with invective and even vulgarity

[1] *Memoirs*, v. 1, 349. [2] *Id.*, 359.

[3] Feb. 9, 1805, *Life of Rev. Manasseh Cutler*, by his grandchildren, v. 2, 182.

[4] Feb. 28, 1805, *Id.*, 192.

[5] Feb. 27, 1805, *Id.* 184.

. . . I never heard him deliver such a weak, feeble, and deranged harangue."[1] To say the least, these comments should be received with a high degree of caution. Cutler, Plumer, and Adams all had the habit of invective as badly as Randolph himself. The only difference was that in them it lacked the artistic form and piquant flavor which he gave it. Cutler and Plumer were bigoted Federalists; and Adams was no better at this time; and all three had quite as little use for a Virginian as Randolph had, or professed to have, for a New Englander. Fully possessed of the idea that the infidel Jefferson and his Democratic *canaille* contemplated nothing less than the removal of all the members of the Supreme Court and the general desecration of the Bench, their minds, under the influence of the stirring spectacle that they had witnessed every day during the trial, and of the inflammatory appeals of Judge Chase's advocates, had become wrought up to the highest point of excitement. It is noticeable that in his *Memoirs* Adams passes no censorious judgment on Randolph's first speech. Who that is familiar with the sour eructations of his *Memoirs* can doubt that he would have done so had it not been a good one? It is noticeable also that Cutler has nothing in his diary, at any rate, to say of this speech except that it was "nothing great"; and that Plumer had nothing to say of it at all. It is enough for us to affirm that the speech, even as reported, can take care of itself. Better speeches have been delivered by other famous orators; many better speeches were delivered by Randolph himself in his career. Lemuel Sawyer, who was, however, by no means an unqualified admirer even of Randolph's public character, tells us that "it was not considered the best of his forensic efforts."[2] As it was but an opening speech in a trial, a kind of speech which imposes distinct limitations upon the highest mani-

[1] Feb. 28, 1805, Plumer MSS., Libr. Cong.
[2] Sawyer, 18.

festations of eloquence, it could hardly be such; but that it was a clear, concise, and pointed statement of what the Managers intended to prove, no one who has read it, and has had enough professional experience to know what the function of an opening speech is, can deny.

How far Adams was justified in imputing extreme irrelevancy and lack of order, coherence, and logic to Randolph's second speech, we really have no means of determining. As reported by Samuel H. Smith and his fellow-stenographer, it occupies only about thirty crown-octavo pages in twelve point type. Whether the speech consumed in its delivery about three and a half hours, as Cutler states, or only two and a half, as Adams states, it must not be fully reported; for even the most deliberate speaker would not take two and a half hours to deliver a speech of such brief length as the printed version of this one. Nor can we see that the speech, even as reported, merits such condemnation as Adams deals out to it. It certainly is not distinguished by the directness, the logical texture, the orderly arrangement and the high-pitched but unbrokenly sustained rhythm of the Yazoo speeches, for instance. At times its voice (so to speak) cracks, but it is illumined here and there by more than one of Randolph's very best mental characteristics. One, his remarkable faculty for lighting up an obscure subject with a single flash, is startlingly illustrated by what he said in reply to the contention of Judge Chase's counsel that Judge Chase was not impeachable for any cause that was not indictable—a contention on which the entire legal argument in the case largely turned.

"Suffer me," he said, "to say a few words on the general doctrine of impeachment, on which the wildest opinions have been advanced, unsupported by the Constitution, inconsistent with reason and at war with each other. It has been contended that an offence to be impeachable must be indictable. For what then (I pray you) was it that this provision of im-

peachment found its way into the Constitution? Could it not have said at once that any civil officer of the United States, convicted on an indictment, should (*ipso facto*) be removed from office. This would be coming at the thing by a short and obvious way. If the Constitution did not contemplate a distinction between an impeachable, and an indictable, offense, whence this cumbrous and expensive process which has cost us much labor and so much anxiety to the nation? Whence this idle parade, this wanton waste of time and treasure, when the ready intervention of a court and jury alone was wanting to rectify the evil? . . . The President of the United States has a qualified negative on all bills passed by the two houses of Congress that he may arrest the passage of a law framed in a moment of legislative delirium. Let us suppose it exercised indiscriminately on every act presented for his acceptance. This surely would be an abuse of his constitutional power richly deserving impeachment; and yet no man will pretend to say it is an indictable offence."[1]

The fact that Randolph shed tears while delivering the closing speech in the Chase case is also evidenced by a letter from Dr. Cutler to Dr. Torrey.

"We had the mortification," he said, "to sit and hear for more than three hours the most outrageous invectives against the Judge and fulsome panegyrics upon himself and his party. In the midst of his harangue the fellow cried like a baby with clear, sheer madness."[2]

The prudence of not inclining the ear too quickly to what such uncompromising Federalists as Plumer or Dr. Cutler had to say about Randolph in connection with the Chase trial is strongly confirmed, we might add, by what Plumer had to say about him as soon as Randolph became alienated from the majority of his party. In his *Register* Plumer refers to this break, which apparently augured so

[1] *Chase Trial*, v. 2, 452.

[2] March 1, 1805, *Manasseh Cutler*, by his grandchilden, v. 2, 193.

well for the Federalists, and, alluding to one of the speeches delivered by Randolph on Gregg's Non-Importation Resolution, he writes to an unknown correspondent in this manner: "The attention of crowded galleries was fixed upon him. The Senators left their chamber to listen to his eloquence. I heard him for nearly two hours with very great pleasure. He is certainly a man of very great talents, and by far the best speaker in the House."[1] (*a*). John Quincy Adams, for whom Ezekiel Webster, the brother of Daniel, once said that even his political adherents could not entertain one kind personal feeling, unless they disembowelled themselves, like a trussed turkey, of all that was human nature within them, felt for John Randolph a hatred which was nothing less than a form of mental gangrene.[2] Randolph, he said, was the image of a great man stamped upon base metal.[3] On another occasion, he likened Randolph's eloquence to that of Hogarth's Gin Lane and Beer Alley.[4] And, on the same occasion, he applied to him two lines from Ovid; the latter of which would not have lost its point if it had been given a retroverted direction:

Pallor in ore sedet; macies in corpore toto,
Pectora felle virent; lingua est suffusa veneno.[5]

His face is ashen; meagre his whole body,
His breast is green with gall; suffused with poison his tongue. (*b*)

But even Adams was compelled to admit in the end, though a little later Daniel Webster would have saved him the necessity of doing so, that there was no one from the Free States in the House able to contend on equal terms with either John Randolph or Henry Clay.[6] And yet,

[1] Mar. 5, 1806, *Life of Wm. Plumer*, by Plumer, 340.
[2] *Andrew Jackson*, by James Parton, v. 3, 166.
[3] *Memoirs*, v. 8, 64.
[4] *New Eng. Federalism*, ed. by H. Adams, 232.
[5] *Ibid.* [6] *Memoirs*, v. 4, 506.

suggestively enough, when considered in connection with what he said of Randolph's second speech in the Chase trial, a few weeks later he describes Randolph as having just made a speech which, as usual, had neither beginning, middle, nor end, and issued from a mind in which egotism, Virginian aristocracy, slave-scourging, liberty, religion, literature, science, wit, fancy, generous feelings, and malignant passions constituted a chaos from which nothing orderly could ever flow. Twenty yards of tape-worm, Adams said, had come from him but there was an endless length left within. However, though he was a mere visitor to the House on this occasion, Adams records in his *Memoirs* the fact that he listened to Randolph between three and four hours, which he would hardly have done if Randolph's eloquence had been a mere vermifuge.[1]

One passage in Randolph's first speech in the Chase trial was destined to become a standing feature of declamation exercises at American academies. This was its conclusion in which he referred to the precipitancy of Judge Chase in passing upon a point of law in the case of John Fries, who was sentenced to death, when tried before Judge Chase, but was pardoned by President Adams.

"I have endeavored, Mr. President," he said, "in a manner I am sensible, very lame and inadequate, to discharge the duty incumbent on me; to enumerate the principal points upon which we shall rely and to repel some of the prominent objections advanced by the Respondent. Whilst we confidently expect his conviction, it is from the strength of our cause, and not from any art or skill in conducting it. It requires so little support that (thank Heaven) it cannot be injured by any weakness of mine. We shall bring forward in proof such a specimen of judicial tyranny as I trust in God will never be again exhibited in our country.

"The Respondent hath closed his defence by an appeal to the great Searcher of Hearts for the purity of his motives. For

[1] *Memoirs*, v. 4, 532.

his sake I rejoice that by the timely exercise of that mercy, which for wise purposes has been reposed in the executive, this appeal is not drowned by the blood of an innocent man crying aloud for vengeance; that the mute agony of widowed despair and the wailing voice of the orphan do not plead to Heaven for justice on the oppressor's head. But for that intervention, self-accusation before that dread tribunal would have been needless. On that awful day, the blood of a poor, ignorant, friendless, unlettered German, murdered under the semblance and color of law, sent without pity to the scaffold would have risen in judgment at the Throne of Grace against the unhappy man arraigned at your bar. But the President of the United States by a well-timed act at once of justice and of mercy (and mercy like charity covereth a multitude of sins) wrested the victim from his grasp, and saved him from the countless horrors of remorse by not suffering the pure ermine of justice to be dyed in the innocent blood of John Fries."[1]

Nor should we fail to recall the sonorous and impressive words with which Randolph made his last appeal to the Senate:

"We have performed our duty, we have bound the criminal and dragged him to your altar. The nation expects from you that award which the evidence and the law requires. It remains for you to say whether he (Judge Chase) shall again become the scourge of an exasperated people, or whether he shall stand as a landmark and a beacon to the present generation and a warning to the future that no talents, however great, no age, however venerable, no character, however sacred, no connections, however influential, shall save that man from the justice of his country who prostitutes the best gifts of Nature and of God and the power, with which he is invested for the general good, to the low purposes of an electioneering partisan."[2]

The whole truth about Randolph's part in the Chase trial, however, cannot be told by any honest biographer

[1] *Chase Trial*, v. 1, 126. [2] *Id.*, v. 2, 481.

without the admission that, to say the least, it added little or nothing to the reputation which he had acquired during the Sixth and Seventh Congresses and the earlier portion of the Eighth. To begin with, the impeachment failed, and who does not remember the lines of Emerson:

> One thing is forever good,
> That one thing is success;
> Dear to the Eumenides,
> And to all the heavenly brood?

Then, the discredit of defeat had to be endured almost entirely by Randolph alone. It was at the direct instigation of a letter from Jefferson to Joseph H. Nicholson that the impeachment proceedings were commenced. After a political harangue by Judge Chase to a Grand Jury at Baltimore, which was subsequently made the basis of one of the articles of impeachment, Jefferson wrote to Nicholson: "Ought this seditious and official attack on the principles of our Constitution and on the proceedings of a state to go unpunished? And to whom so pointedly as yourself will the public look for the necessary measures?" But that circumspect politician was careful to add: "For myself it is better that I should not interfere"[1]; and, acting under the advice of Macon, Nicholson, for fear that he might be charged with coveting Judge Chase's shoes, passed on the lead in the case to Randolph, who was not easily perturbed by fears of any sort.[2] The consequence was that, when the impeachment failed, Jefferson had nothing to do but to keep his lips closed, and Nicholson had only a subaltern's share of the catastrophe to bear; while Randolph had to face the plenary responsibility which always attaches to the commander-in-chief in a disastrous enterprise. And the necessity certainly could not have been rendered any the less painful or pre-

[1] May 13, 1803, *Writings* (Mem. Ed.), v. 10, 390.
[2] Macon to Nicholson, Aug. 6, 1803, Dodd's *Macon*, 188.

judicial to him by the fact, which he must have known, that at least one member of Jefferson's cabinet, who had his eye upon the Presidency, found no little satisfaction in the blighting effect that the miscarriage of the Chase impeachment was likely to have upon the opening bud of Randolph's presidential promise. We know from the *Memoirs* of John Quincy Adams that, after the verdict in the Chase case, Madison took little pains to conceal his amusement over the chagrin of the Managers.[1]

Moreover, with his usual clear-sightedness, Joseph G. Baldwin, in his admirable essay on Randolph, appraises very correctly the worth of Randolph's first and second speeches in the Chase trial when he says that his efforts in it, "though good specimens of oratory and rhetoric, were rather a foil than a match to the trained forensic skill, legal learning, and rough but strong logical powers of Luther Martin."[2] The questions, involved in the argument in the case, were in a large measure purely legal questions, to which no one could hope to address himself with distinguished success, unless qualified for the task by the highest degree of technical knowledge and special training. Burke said that lawyers failed in Parliament because they brought to it nothing but the rinsings of their empty bottles. If Randolph can be justly said to have failed in point of forensic efficiency in the Chase case, it was because he brought to it nothing but the rinsings of his empty parliamentary bottles; which, under the cricumstances, was all that he or any other member of the House, who was not a lawyer by profession, could bring to it. The eight articles of impeachment were written by his own hand, and they were drawn up with a degree of transparent clearness and pointed brevity which any lawyer, however eminent or skillful, might have envied. But this was mainly a matter of literary composition, calling for nothing more than the exercise of native and

[1] V. 1, 365. [2] *Party Leaders*, 176.

acquired gifts of expression which Randolph possessed in a remarkable degree. His opening speech, too, as we have said, was an excellent one; but the office of delivering this called for no qualifications essentially different in kind from those requisite for his statements as Chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means of the House. The searching test, however, of Randolph's ability to cope with his professional antagonists, to whom the discussion of legal questions was as familiar as the untying of their garters, arose when he came to his concluding speech on behalf of the Managers, in which, in addition to summing up and dissecting the evidence, he was expected, among other things, to contend that Judge Chase erred at the trial of James Thompson Callender at Richmond in excluding the evidence of John Taylor of Caroline because he could not prove the truth of the whole of one of the charges in the indictment, although the charge embraced more than one fact,[1] and also in awarding a capias against Callender instead of ordering the clerk to issue a summons.[2] In his last speech, Randolph fell below the standard of his professional antagonists as Fox or Sheridan, neither of whom were lawyers, might have done, or as Martin, or Harper, if they had not been lawyers, might have done. When he entered upon this speech, he was in a low state of health, partly the result of habitual indisposition, and partly the result of the excessive labors which his delicate frame had undergone during the second session of the Eighth Congress. On this account, he had more than once been compelled to be absent while the trial was going on; and, doubtless, to the nervous, overwrought condition, in which he issued from the exciting Yazoo debates to take his place at the head of the Managers, are to be attributed the symptoms of physical disturbance which marked, though not to the exaggerated extent pictured by Adams, his second speech. Singularly deliberate and self-possessed

[1] *Chase Trial*, v. 1, 6. [2] *Id.*, 7.

as a speaker, if a great volume of contemporary testimony to that effect is to be believed, no other explanation is tenable. But, apart from his normal state of health, poor at its best, Randolph brought to this second speech in the Chase case pretty much everything that he had to bring to such a case; fresh, crisp ideas, happy images, blistering invective, quick strokes of instinctive intelligence, and polished declamation. But law and legal methods of statement and reasoning, in other words the things most essential to the proper presentation of his case, he did not bring, because he did not have them to bring. To use a coarse saying, he was not fighting on his own dunghill; and Hopkinson, Key, Harper, and Martin were. If he failed, it was as Luther Martin failed in the Federal Convention of 1787, when brought into contrast with men like James Madison, who had given to great questions of public policy, and to broad constitutional principles, the same special study that Martin had given to ordinary principles of civil and criminal law, or as he would have failed if he had sought to rival Randolph in the debate over Gregg's Non-Importation Resolution or in the debates over the Missouri Compromise. There is a world of shrewd justice in the question put by Charles Lamb to someone who criticised Smollett's continuation of Hume's *History of England.* Well, what if Hume had attempted to continue Humphrey Clinker? Luther Martin and Robert Goodloe Harper were great lawyers; Randolph was a great parliamentary and popular orator. If they won any decisive triumph over him in the Chase case, it was a fleeting one, when measured by its relations to the sum of Randolph's achievements, and to the extent of his fame in his own and our time. A few brief biographical sketches suffice to satisfy such special interest as is felt about them, masters of their noble calling in their day as they were; but the universal interest felt in Randolph by his contemporaries, and the widespread interest felt in

him long after his death and now, have been attested by every trumpet that Fame presses to her lips; history, biography, tradition, song, the brush of the painter, the pencil of the caricaturist, the death mask of the sculptor. Of all the men who directly participated in the Chase trial his shade is almost the only one that can proudly say: "*Volito vivus per ora hominum.*" Nor should we omit to mention the fact that one of the remarkable lawyers, who represented Chase during his trial, Joseph Hopkinson, is known to have once expressed the opinion that Randolph should have been bred to the bar.[1] "Were we," says Sawyer, "to select any portion of his (Randolph's) legislative career as the most brilliant, one in which his faculties were in their fullest vigor, and his influence the most powerful, we should refer to the . . . sessions of 1804–05."[2] Whether our selection would fall upon the same sessions or not, it is unnecessary to say; but it is certain that, besides testimony of a more direct nature to the shining talents exhibited by Randolph during those sessions, we have convincing evidence of the place that he held in the eye of the House in the numerous references made to him in debate during those sessions by friend and foe. A proof of the admiration and cordial affection entertained for him by his most faithful adherents in Congress is found in the declaration of Cæsar A. Rodney on one occasion that it was both his pride and pleasure to act with him.[3]

Again and again, reluctant acknowledgments of his rare gifts were made by his opponents in debate. During the Yazoo discussion, one of his Virginia colleagues, John G. Jackson, who approved the Yazoo Compromise, and had no good blood for him, declared disconsolately that Randolph's influence in the House was equal to the rapacity of the speculator [Granger] whose gigantic grasp he had

[1] J. R. to Francis W. Gilmer, Mar. 15, 1817, *Century Mag.*, v. 29, 714.
[2] Sawyer, 17. [3] *A. of C.*, 1803–5, v. 1, 1118.

described.[1] On the other hand, the following extract from an attack on him by Matthew Lyon, of Vermont, during the Yazoo discussion, is a good illustration of the extent to which the unhappy sectional jealousies between the North and the South, which began so early and lasted so long, were inflamed by the general feeling, on the part of the Democratic masses of New England, that the structure of Southern society was essentially aristocratic, and that the institution of slavery bestowed too much ease and luxury upon the *beati possidentes* of its creation not to justify a little acrid discontent on their part with their own less favored lot under more equal conditions beneath a harsher sky and on a more sterile soil. After repelling the insinuation that Granger (*a*) had bribed him with postal contracts, Lyon said:

"No, Sir, these charges have been fabricated in the disordered imagination of a young man whose pride has been provoked by my refusing to sing *encore* to all his political dogmas. I have had the impudence to differ from him in some few points and some few times to neglect his *fiat*. It is long since I have observed that the very sight of my plebeian face has had an unpleasant effect on the gentleman's nose; for, out of respect to this House and to the State he represents, I will yet occasionally call him gentleman. I say, Sir, these charges have been brought against me by a person nursed in the bosom of opulence, inheriting the life services of a numerous train of the human species, and extensive fields, the original proprietors of which property, in all probability, came no honester by it than the purchasers of the Georgia lands did what they claim. Let that gentleman apply the fable of the thief and the receiver in Dilworth's Spelling Book, so ingeniously quoted by himself in his own case, and give up the stolen men in his possession."[2]

But even Lyon had to admit, as soon as he caught his breath, after this diatribe, that Randolph's fortune, leisure,

[1] *A. of C.*, 1804–5, 1078. [2] *Id.*, 1125.

and *genius* had enabled him to obtain a great share of the wisdom of the schools.[1]

The acquittal of Judge Chase was a stinging disappointment to both Randolph and Nicholson. The former relieved his pent-up feelings by promptly proposing in the House an amendment to the Federal Constitution, authorizing the President to remove a Federal judge on the joint address of both Houses of Congress[2]; and the latter by promptly proposing an amendment to the Federal Constitution empowering State Legislatures to recall United States Senators at their pleasure.[3] (*a*) But even the result of the Chase impeachment could not seriously qualify the supreme gratification with which Randolph in after years reverted to Jefferson's first administration and to the position that he had occupied in connection with it. To him those four years were always a kind of Saturnian age when the army and navy were diminished and the insolence of the military hireling kept safely within bounds; when the reduction of national taxation and the reduction of the national debt went hand in hand; when true Democratic thrift, frugality, simplicity, justice, and liberty prevailed; and when a vast stretch of country, almost large enough to sate the territorial lust of Alexander or Cæsar, was purchased for a song from a conqueror even greedier of dominion than they.

"Sir," said Randolph, on one occasion, in his original way, "I have never seen but one administration which seriously and in good faith was disposed to give up its patronage and was willing to go farther than Congress or even the people themselves, so far as Congress represents their feelings, desired; and that was the first administration of Thomas Jefferson. He, Sir, was the only man I ever knew or heard of who really, truly, and honestly not only said '*nolo episcopari*' but actually refused the mitre. It was a part of my duty, and one of the most pleasant

[1] *A. of C.*, 1804–5; 1125.
[2] *Id.*, v. 2, 1213. [3] *Id.*, 1804–5; v. 2, 1214.

parts of public duty that I ever performed under his recommendation—not because he recommended it, thank God!—to move in this House to relieve the public at once from the whole burden of that system of Internal Taxation, the practical effect of which was, whatever might have been its object, to produce patronage rather than revenue. He, too, had really at heart, and showed it by his conduct, the reduction of the National debt; and that in the only mode by which it can ever be reduced, by lessening the expenses of the Government till they are below its receipts."

"Never was there an administration," he said in a note to his well-known speech in 1828 on Retrenchment and Reform, "more brilliant than that of Mr. Jefferson up to this period. We were indeed in the 'full tide of successful experiment!' Taxes repealed; the public debt amply provided for, both principal and interest; sinecures abolished; Louisiana acquired; public confidence unbounded."[2]

[1] *Reg. of Debates*, v. 4, Part 1, 1170.
[2] Bouldin, 303.

CHAPTER VI

Congressional Career Continued, Randolph Breaks with the Jefferson Administration

When the Ninth Congress met on December 2, 1805, Macon was again elected Speaker of the House,[1] and Randolph was again appointed Chairman of its Committee on Ways and Means.[2] One of his first acts was to oppose a proposition that a medal should be presented to William Eaton for his gallantry and good conduct in his expedition against Tripoli, and his opposition was voiced in the academic English, of which Congress seems to have had the good sense and taste never to complain:

"It has been stated," he said, "that but three or four medals had been struck during the Revolutionary War, one I believe for Saratoga, another for the capitulation of York, a third perhaps upon that occasion more august when the Commander-in-Chief of our armies came to resign into the hands of the civil authority that military power with which he had been intrusted for the salvation of his country. I have always understood that medals were struck, not so much in compliment to an individual, as to commemorate some great national event, and we are now called upon to commemorate the great national event of what, Sir? A skirmish between a few of our countrymen and a handful of undisciplined, half-armed barbarians. As this question is rather a subject of taste and feeling than of argument, I shall not trouble the committee upon it further than to suggest that there is a true and false

[1] *A. of C.*, 1805–7, v. 1, 254. [2] *Id.*, 255.

sublime in politics as well as in poetry and that by attempting to soar too high we shall only plunge into bathos."[1]

The question really at issue was whether Eaton should be given a medal or a sword, a gift of less significance, and Randolph, and nearly a majority of the House besides, thought a sword sufficient. And nothing could be more felicitously expressed than the distinction upon which he insisted, and which might well be taken to heart at the present time, when military decorations for participation in the World War are being so lavishly distributed that their chief value consists in the protection that they afford the wearer against the unfavorable inferences that might be drawn from failure to receive one:

"Acts of heroism should never pass unheeded by; but every day did not produce a Cocles or Mutius. It was to preserve some proportion between the reward and the nature and value of the service that he opposed the resolution in its present shape. He wished the House to be more frugal of the treasure of public applause; it was more precious than that which all seemed ready enough to guard. In such cases, it was always safest to err on the side of economy. Already it seemed that a sword presented in the name of the nation was held too cheap a recompense for ordinary professional service. Where was this to end? The utmost penury of approbation would not so injure the tone of public sentiment as this lavish prodigality."[2]

Here we reach the circumstances which led directly to the defection of Randolph from the Jefferson administration, and which were set forth by him in the first of the celebrated letters signed "Decius." These letters were published in the *Richmond Enquirer*, and the first appeared on Aug. 15, 1806. Their authorship was never involved in much doubt, but that they were from the hand of Randolph himself is now, aside from other evidence, established by a letter from Joseph Bryan to Randolph which

[1] *A. of C.*, 1805–07, v. 1, 315. [2] 1805–07, v. 1, 318.

has never, we believe, been published. "I have seen your piece signed Decius," Bryan said, "and all I can say is you have a confounded way of writing and speaking broad-out. You can't learn to call black blue, and yellow white."[1]

On Dec. 3, 1805, Jefferson's first annual message, after his sweeping reëlection to the Presidency, was laid before the two Houses of Congress. It was penned at a time when Great Britain and Napoleon were engaged in too desperate a struggle with each other to care much whether the blows aimed by them at each other fell upon a neutral head or not; and when the jealousy of Spain, inflamed by the fact that the soil of the North American Continent was slipping from under her feet, was inflicting every grievous injury that it dared to do upon the people of the United States at sea and on land. After referring to the specific forms that this injury had assumed, the message concluded with the announcement that the President had found it necessary at length to order the American troops on the Spanish-American frontiers of the United States to be in readiness to protect American citizens and to repel by arms any future aggressions.

Three days after the transmission of this message the President sent another to Congress, but this time a special and confidential one on the subject of our relations with Spain. It recalled the fruitless efforts which our representatives at the Court of Madrid had made to obtain from Spain indemnity for depredations upon American commerce for which she was responsible, or to arrive at any satisfactory understanding with her as to the true boundaries of Louisiana; and it was accompanied by documents which, in the opinion of the President, authorized the inference that it was the intention of the Spaniards to advance on our possessions until they should be repressed by an opposing force. "Considering that Congress alone is constitutionally invested with the power of changing our

[1] Sept. 12, 1806, Bryan MSS.

conditions from peace to war," the President declared, "I have thought it my duty to await their authority for using force in any degree which could be avoided."

The message further stated that there was reason to believe that France was disposed to effect a settlement of the boundary dispute between Spain and the United States on a plan analogous to what our Ministers had proposed, and so comprehensive as to remove as far as possible the grounds of future collision and controversy on the eastern as well as western side of the Mississippi:

"The present crisis in Europe," the President said, "is favorable for pressing a settlement and not a moment should be lost in availing ourselves of it. Should it pass unimproved our situation would become much more difficult. Formal war is not necessary. It is not probable that it will follow, but the protection of our citizens, the spirit and honor of our country require that force should be interposed in a certain degree. It will probably contribute to advance the object of peace.

"But the course to be pursued will require the command of means which it belongs to Congress exclusively to yield or deny. To them I communicate every fact material for their information and the documents necessary to enable them to judge for themselves. To their wisdom then I look for the course I am to pursue, and will pursue with sincere zeal that which they shall approve."

This message, with the accompanying documents, was referred to a select committee composed of Randolph, Nicholson, John Cotton Smith, of Connecticut, Gurdon S. Mumford, of New York, David R. Williams, of South Carolina, Barnabas Bidwell, of Massachusetts, and Robert Brown, of Pennsylvania.

In his first letter, "Decius"[1] tells us that Randolph, as chairman of this committee, immediately waited on the President and informed him of the direction which had been given to the message; expressing at the same time his

[1] *Richm. Enq.*, Aug. 15, 1806.

willingness and readiness to coöperate, so far as his principles and judgment would permit, in such plans as the Executive might have devised for the occasion. He then learned, not without some surprise, that an appropriation of two millions was wanted to purchase Florida. He told the President without reserve that he would never agree to such a measure because the money had not been asked for in the message; that he could not consent to shift upon his own shoulders, or those of the House, the proper responsibility of the Executive; but that, even if the money had been explicitly demanded, he should have been averse to granting it, as, after the total failure of every attempt at negotiation, such a step would disgrace the American people, as France would never withhold her ill offices when by their interposition she could extort money from them, and because, if Great Britain, with whom the United States had serious matters of controversy, did not consider their supplying her enemies with money as a breach of their neutrality, it must inspire her with contempt for any attitude of resistance which they might assume towards her. Under the circumstances, in the judgment of Randolph, it was equally to the interest of Spain and the United States to accommodate the matter by an exchange of territory. To this idea the President seemed much opposed. Randolph further stated that the nations of Europe, like the Barbary Powers, would in the future refuse to look at the credentials of American Ministers without a previous *douceur;* and he said much more to the same purpose.

So far we have told the story in all but the exact words of "Decius," and we shall continue for a time to follow closely in his footsteps.

The Committee met on Dec. 7, but came to no definite conclusion. One of its members, Barnabas Bidwell, to whom the esoteric meaning of the message had doubtless been confided by the President, construed it into a requisition for money for purposes of foreign intercourse, and

proposed a grant to that effect; but his construction was not supported, and his proposition was overruled. He, himself, when the subject was agitated in the House, would not avow the same construction of the message which he had given to it in committee. On Dec. 14, Randolph was obliged to go to Baltimore, whence he did not return until Dec. 21. Previous to his departure, having occasion to call on Madison, the Secretary of State, he was told by him that France would not permit Spain to adjust her differences with the United States; that France wanted money, and that they must give it to her or have a Spanish and French war. On the morning of Dec. 21, Randolph returned from Baltimore, and the committee was immediately convened. As they were about to assemble, he was called aside by the Secretary of the Treasury—Gallatin—with whom he retired, and who put into his hands a paper headed: "Provision for the Purchase of Florida." As soon as Randolph cast his eyes on this heading, he declared that he would not vote a shilling. The Secretary interrupted him by observing, with his characteristic caution, that he did not mean to be understood as recommending the measure; but that, if the committee should deem it advisable to raise the necessary supplies, he had devised, as he had been requested or directed to do, a plan for effecting the object. Randolph expressed himself as disgusted with the whole proceeding, which he could not but consider as highly disingenuous. He said that he was as sensible of the importance of Florida to the United States and as willing to acquire it honorably as any man; but he would never consent to proceed in that way; that the most scrupulous care had been taken to cover the reputation of the administration, though Congress was expected to act as if it had no character to lose; that, whilst the official language of the Executive was consistent and dignified, warned them of the determination of Spain to advance upon the possessions of the United States until she should

be repressed by an opposing force, declared that the protection of American citizens as well as the spirit and honor of the United States rendered the interposition of force necessary, and announced at the same time the determination of the President to pursue the course which the wisdom of Congress might prescribe, Congress was privily required to take upon itself all the odium of shrinking from the national honor and national defence and of delivering the public purse to the first cutthroat that demanded it. From the face of the official communications, it would appear that the Executive had discharged his duty in recommending manly and vigorous measures which he had been obliged to abandon because he had been compelled by Congress to pursue an opposite course, when, in fact, Congress itself had been acting all the while at Executive instigation. Randolph further observed that he did not understand this double set of opinions and principles, the one ostensible to go upon the Journals and before the public, the other the efficient and the real motive to action; that he held true wisdom and cunning to be utterly incompatible in the conduct of great affairs; and that he had strong objections to the measure in itself; but that, in the shape in which it was presented, his repugnance to it was insuperable. And, in a subsequent conversation with the President, in which these objections were recapitulated, Randolph declared that he too had a character to support and principles to maintain, and avowed his opposition to the whole scheme.

So far we have trudged obsequiously along behind the heels of "Decius," but to his narrative we might add the fact that, when Madison made his statement that the United States must give France money or have a Spanish and French war, Randolph abruptly left his presence, exclaiming as he went: "Good morning, Sir, I see I am not calculated for a politician."[1]

[1] Garland, v. 1, 217.

Upon the assembling of the Committee, after the interview between Randolph and Gallatin, it instructed Randolph to obtain from the Secretary of War an opinion as to the force which would be necessary for the defence of the Southern frontier of the United States, and also information as to the number of troops already stationed in that part of the country. This instruction was duly carried out by Randolph and a reply was made by the Secretary of War which was laid before the Committee at another meeting. At this meeting, Bidwell moved the adoption of the same proposition which Gallatin had placed in Randolph's hand, namely; that Congress should vote an appropriation of two millions of dollars for the purchase of Florida and, to raise the sum, should provide for the continuance of certain existing duties. The motion was rejected, and Randolph, under the instructions of the Committee, drafted a report on its behalf stating that it saw in the multiplied aggressions of Spain ample cause for war, but, conceiving that the true interests of the American people required peace, it forebore to recommend offensive measures. The Committee, the report further stated, believed it to be the policy of America to reap the neutral harvest, and to seize the favorable occasion for extinguishing the public debt, at once the price of her liberties and the badge of her ancient servitude. Its sense was neither to make war nor to purchase peace, but to provide for the defence of the actual territory of the country which its highest authority had announced to have been violated and to be menaced with fresh invasion. Accompanying the report, was a resolution that such number of troops (not exceeding some maximum limit) as the President should deem sufficient to protect the Southern frontier of the United States from Spanish inroad and insult, and to chastise the same, be immediately raised.

This reverberation of the battle-cry which the President had set up in his Messages, mainly for the purpose of

strengthening his position at home, was the last thing that he desired. When Bidwell's motion was made, Nicholson had a set of resolutions in his pocket which had been handed to him by Gallatin for the purpose of carrying the real intentions of the President into effect, but, when the motion was rejected by the Committee, without even being seconded, Nicholson suppressed them, and returned them the next day to Gallatin with the expression of his own disapproval.[1] But Jefferson carried his point, as he rarely failed to do in such cases, when the report and the resolution drafted by Randolph reached the House. There the report was rejected by a vote of 72 to 53, and a pending proposition, which had been offered by Bidwell to appropriate a blank sum for the purpose of defraying any extraordinary expenses of foreign intercourse, was immediately taken up. The avowed object of the measure was to enable the President to begin a negotiation for the purchase of Florida. A motion was made by Randolph to confine the appropriation to that object, and this motion was agreed to by a vote of 78 to 58. It was followed by another made by Randolph which sought to render the debt that was to be incurred redeemable at the pleasure of the United States. This was carried without a division; but, afterwards, when a bill was brought in for the purpose of formally enacting the original proposition with these amendments, the President had his retainers in such a good state of discipline that the House rescinded its vote for a specific appropriation, and framed its grant in such a manner as to make the amount appropriated applicable at the discretion of the Executive to any extraordinary purpose whatsoever of foreign intercourse. Nothing daunted, Randolph also made a motion to limit the amount that the administration might agree to pay for the territory in question upon the ground that, if Congress were disposed to acquire Florida by purchase, it should fix the

[1] Nicholson to Gallatin, Dec. 8, 1805, Gallatin MSS.

maximum price, and thereby furnish our ministers with a safeguard against the rapacity of France; but this motion too was trampled under foot by the solid Jeffersonian phalanx. When the bill was taken up for discussion, Randolph assailed it in a speech of extraordinary eloquence, of which he has given us a bare abstract in the first letter of "Decius." It is deeply to be regretted that the entire debate on the subject of which this bill was an outgrowth should have been conducted in secrecy. "On that occasion," declares Garland, "John Randolph is said to have delivered the ablest and most eloquent speech ever heard on the floor of Congress."[1] This is pretty ardent even for biographical love, but it is not out of keeping with the reports of the speech which reached Timothy Pickering, at the time a member of the Senate. "This bill (or rather the resolution on which it was founded)," he wrote to Rufus King from Washington, on Feb. 8, 1806, "was the subject of John Randolph's determined opposition—sarcastic reproaches on its advocates, and of strains of eloquence never before heard from him in that House; such is the report of members."[2]

"Decius" tells us that, in attacking the bill, Randolph urged, among other things, that, if the President, acting entirely upon his own responsibility, and exercising his acknowledged constitutional powers, should negotiate for the purchase of Florida, the House of Representatives would, in that case, be left free to ratify or annul the contract; but that the course, proposed to be pursued, would reduce the discretion of the Legislature to a mere shadow. At its ensuing session, Congress would find itself, in relation to this subject, a deliberative body but in name; and it could not, without a manifest dereliction of its own principles, and, perhaps, without a violation of public faith, refuse to sanction any treaty entered into by the President

[1] Garland, v. 1, 216.

[2] *Life of Rufus King*, by his grandson, v. 4, 483.

under the auspices of the Legislature and with powers so unlimited. However great its confidence in the Chief Magistrate, he, Randolph said, would never consent to give any President so dangerous a proof of it. If the President deemed it advisable to purchase foreign territory, he was free to enter into stipulations for that purpose, whilst Congress would remain equally free to sanction or disapprove such stipulations. If he thought proper to ask for an appropriation for that object, the responsibility for the measure would rest upon him, but, when the Legislature undertook to prescribe the course which he should pursue, and which he had pledged himself to pursue, the case was entirely changed. The House should have no channel, through which it could be made acquainted with the opinions of the Executive, but such as was official, responsible and known to the Constitution, and that it was a prostitution of its high and solemn functions to act upon an unconstitutional suggestion of the private wishes of the President, irresponsibly announced by an irresponsible individual and in direct hostility to his avowed opinions. The case could not have been more clearly and vigorously stated than it was by Randolph.

So far, however, as the ultimate object of persuasion was concerned, all this eloquence was the merest babble; for Jefferson, the most dexterous party leader of the higher order ever known to the history of the United States, had his forces well in hand. The bill was passed by a large majority, and, on Jan. 16, 1806, was transmitted to the Senate for its approval.

Randolph was more fortunate in his opposition to a concurrent proposition, offered by Bidwell too, that provided for the continuance of the duties mentioned above. It was an unconstitutional mode of voting supplies, he said, to raise taxes in conclave. If members of the House should once come to levying impositions upon their constituents with closed doors, whilst the votes which they should give

(to say nothing of the discussion) would from the very nature of the secret journal remain concealed from their constituents, there would be an end of the public liberties. This reasoning was too cogent and axiomatic for even brute force to withstand, and the idea was for a time abandoned, but, on the last day of the session, it was carried into effect upon the pretext that a previous message of the President had intimated the existence of an unfriendly disposition on the part of Tunis towards the United States.

On Jan. 29, 1806, Andrew Gregg, of Pennsylvania, offered a resolution in the House, declaring that no commodities of Great Britain or any of her colonies or dependencies ought to be imported into the United States until "arrangements deemed satisfactory by the President of the United States" should be arrived at between the two countries; and, on March 5th, Randolph delivered his first speech against it. This speech was one of the most graphic and pungent that he ever delivered, was the beginning of the course of conduct, which finally drew him into flat disapproval of the War of 1812, and was all the more interesting still because it was attended by a direct attack upon the Jefferson administration, which severed the last ligaments between himself and it. The origin of the Gregg resolution was the right claimed by Great Britain to visit American ships for the purpose of seizing and impressing any British subjects that might be serving as sailors on them, and the savage war of commercial retaliation which Great Britain and France were waging against each other. This war had occasioned the adoption of stern and highly vexatious measures by England for the suppression of the circuitous carrying-trade between the West Indies and France which American ship owners had been, to a large extent, fraudulently conducting through American ports of entry and exportation without any real change in the ownership of the cargoes at these ports.

"I am not surprised," Randolph said, "to hear this resolution discussed by its friends as a war measure. They say (it is true) that it is not a war measure; but they defend it on principles which would justify none but war measures and seem pleased with the idea that it may prove the forerunner of war. If war is necessary—if we have reached this point—let us have war. But, while I have life, I will never consent to these incipient war measures, which in their commencement breathe nothing but peace though they plunge [us] at last into war. It has been well observed by the gentleman from Pennsylvania behind me (Mr. Clay) that the situation of this nation in 1793 was in every respect different from that in which it finds itself in 1806. Let me ask, too, if the situation of England is not since materially changed? Gentlemen, who, it would appear from their language, have not got beyond the horn-book of politics, talk of our ability to cope with the British Navy and tell us of the War of our Revolution. What was the situation of Great Britain then? She was then contending for the empire of the British Channel; barely able to maintain a doubtful equality with her enemies over whom she never gained the superiority until Rodney's victory of the twelfth of April. What is her present situation? The combined fleets of France, Spain and Holland are dissipated; they no longer exist. I am not surprised to hear men advocate these wild opinions, to see them, goaded on by a spirit of mercantile avarice, straining their feeble strength to excite the nation to war, when they have reached this stage of infatuation that we are an overmatch for Great Britain on the ocean. It is mere waste of time to reason with such persons. They do not deserve anything like serious refutation. The proper arguments for such statesmen are a straight waistcoat, a dark room, water-gruel and depletion.[1] . . . What is the question in dispute? The carrying trade. What part of it? The fair, the honest and the useful trade that is engaged in carrying our own productions to foreign markets and bringing back their productions in exchange? No, Sir. It is that carrying trade which covers enemy's property and carries the coffee, the sugar, and other West India products to the mother country. No, Sir, if

[1] *A. of C.*, 1805–7, v. 1, 555.

this great agricultural nation is to be governed by Salem and Boston, New York and Philadelphia, and Baltimore and Norfolk and Charleston, let gentlemen come out and say so; and let a committee of public safety be appointed from those towns to carry on the Government. I for one will not mortgage my property and my liberty to carry on this trade. The nation said so seven years ago; I said so then and I say so now. It is not for the honest carrying-trade of America, but for this mushroom, this fungus of war—for a trade which as soon as the nations of Europe are at peace will no longer exist—it is for this that the spirit of avaricious traffic would plunge us into war. I am forcibly struck on this occasion by the recollection of a remark made by one of the ablest (if not the honestest) Ministers that England ever produced. I mean Sir Robert Walpole who said that the country gentlemen (poor meek souls!) came up every year to be sheared, that they laid mute and patient whilst their fleeces were taken off, but that, if he touched a single bristle of the commercial interest, the whole stye was in an uproar. It was indeed shearing the hog—'great cry and little wool.' But we are asked, are we willing to bend the neck to England; to submit to her outrages? No, Sir, I answer that it will be time enough for us to vindicate the violation of our flag on the ocean when they shall have told us what they have done in resentment of the violation of the actual territory of the United States by Spain."[1]

Then, after declaring that he deemed it no sacrifice of dignity to say to the Leviathan of the deep that we were unable to contend with her on her own element but that, if she came within our actual limits, we would shed our last drop of blood in their defence, he continued in the same strain of nervous rhetoric—every word like the arrow of Acestes flaming as it flew:

"But this is not my only objection to entering upon this naval warfare. I am averse to a naval war with any nation whatever. I was opposed to the naval war of the last administration, and I am as ready to oppose a naval war of the present

[1] *A. of C.*, 1805–7, v. 1, 557.

administration, should they meditate such a measure. What! Shall this great mammoth of the American forest leave his native element and plunge into the water in a mad contest with the shark? Let him beware that his proboscis is not bitten off in the engagement. Let him stay on shore and not be excited by the mussels and periwinkles on the strand"; that is, the New England Crowninshields, Varnums, and Bidwells.[1] "Take away," he went on, "the British navy, and France tomorrow is the tyrant of the ocean. This brings me to the second point. How far is it politic in the United States to throw their weight into the scale of France at this moment, from whatever motive, to aid the views of her gigantic ambition; to make her mistress of the sea and land; to jeopardize the liberties of mankind? Sir, you may help to crush Great Britain; you may assist in breaking down her naval dominion; but you can not succeed to it. The iron scepter of the ocean will pass into his hands who wears the iron crown of the land. You may then expect a new code of maritime law. Where will you look for redress? I can tell the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. Crowninshield] that there is nothing in his rule of three that will save us even although he should outdo himself and exceed the financial ingenuity which he so memorably displayed on a recent occasion. No, Sir, let the battle of Actium be once fought, and the whole line of seacoast will be at the mercy of the conqueror. The Atlantic, deep and wide as it is, will prove just as good a barrier against his ambition, if directed against you, as the Mediterranean to the power of the Cæsars. Do I mean (when I say so) to crouch to the invader? No! I will meet him at the water's edge, and fight every inch of ground from thence to the mountains—from the mountains to the Mississippi. But, after tamely submitting to an outrage on your domicile, will you bully and look big at an insult on your flag three thousand miles off? But, Sir, I have a yet more cogent reason against going to war for the honor of the flag in the narrow seas, or any other maritime punctilio. It springs from my attachment to the Government under which I live. I declare in the face of day that this Government was

[1] *A. of C.*, 1805–07, v. 1, 558, 559.

not instituted for the purposes of offensive war. No, it was framed (to use its own language) 'for the common defence and the general welfare'; which are inconsistent with offensive war. I call that offensive war which goes out of our jurisdiction and limits for the attainment or protection of objects not within those limits and that jurisdiction. As in 1798, I was opposed to this species of warfare, because I believed it would raze the constitution to its very foundations, so in 1806 I am opposed to it, and on the same grounds. No sooner do you put the Constitution to this use—to a test which it is by no means calculated to endure—than its incompetency becomes manifest and apparent to all. I fear, if you go into a foreign war for a circuitous, unfair carrying-trade, you will come out without your Constitution. Have not you contractors enough yet in this House? Or do you want to be overrun and devoured by commissaries and all the vermin of contract? I fear, Sir, that what are called 'the energy men' will rise up again; men who will burn the parchment. We shall be told that our Government is too free; or, as they would say, weak and inefficient. Much virtue, Sir, in terms. That we must give the President power to call forth the resources of the nation. That is to filch the last shilling from our pockets; to drain the last drop of blood from our veins."[1]

Already Randolph's heart was fermenting with the *Sæva indignatio* which Jefferson and everyone who adhered to Jefferson were soon to feel so keenly, and, as he always spoke without written preparation, whatever lurked in his heart was almost certain to find its way to his lips. Recalling the fact that Crowninshield, who had been a sea-captain in the East Indian trade, had suggested in the debate that, in case of war, the United States might confiscate debts due by it to British subjects, Randolph said:

"If on a late occasion you could not borrow at a less rate of interest than eight per cent, when the Government avowed that they would pay to the last shilling of the public ability,

[1] *A. of C.*, 1805–07, v. 1, 559.

at what price do you expect to raise money with an avowal of these nefarious opinions? God help you if these are your ways and means for carrying on war! If your finances are in the hands of such a Chancellor of the Exchequer. Because a man can take an observation and keep a log-book and a reckoning; can navigate a cock-boat to the West Indies or the East, shall he aspire to navigate the great vessel of State—to stand at the helm of public councils? *Ne sutor ultra crepidam.*"[1]

But Crowninshield thus contemptuously brushed aside was only a feeble porter at the secret door which Randolph was resolved to enter.

"But the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. Gregg)," he said, "tells you that he is for acting in this as in all things, uninfluenced by the opinion of any Minister whatever—foreign or, I presume, domestic. On this point, I am willing to meet the gentleman; am unwilling to be dictated to by any Minister at home or abroad. Is he willing to act on the same independent footing? I have before protested and I again protest against secret, irresponsible, overruling influence. The first question I asked when I saw the gentleman's resolution was: 'Is this a measure of the Cabinet?' Not of an open, declared cabinet; but of an invisible, inscrutable, unconstitutional cabinet, without responsibility, unknown to the Constitution. I speak of back-stairs influence—of men who bring messages to this House, which although they do not appear on the Journals govern its decisions. Sir, the first question that I asked on the subject of British relations was, what is the opinion of the Cabinet? What measures will they recommend to Congress? (Well knowing that whatever measures we might take they must execute them and therefore that we should have their opinion on the subject.) My answer was (and from a Cabinet Minister too) 'there is no longer any Cabinet.'"[2]

Then, Randolph stopped for a moment to hold up to scorn what had been said about the fur trade.

[1] *A. of C.*, 1805–07, v. 1, 560. [2] *Id.*, 561.

"But the gentleman [Mr. Gregg] has told you that we ought to go to war, if for nothing else, for the fur trade. Now, Sir, the people, on whose support he seems to calculate, follow, let me tell him, a better business; and let me add that, whilst men are happy at home, reaping their own fields, the fruits of their labor and industry, there is little danger of their being induced to go 1600 or 1700 miles in pursuit of beavers, racoons, or opossums, much less of going to war for the privilege."[1]

Then, Randolph reverted to the time when he too was singing *Ça ira* and dancing the *Carmagnole.*

"Gentlemen talk of 1793. They might as well go back to the Trojan War. What was your situation then? Then every heart beat high with sympathy for France, for Republican France. I am not prepared to say with my friend from Pennsylvania [Mr. Clay] that we were all ready to draw our swords in her cause, but I affirm that we were prepared to have gone great lengths. I am not ashamed to pay this compliment to the hearts of the American People even at the expense of their understandings. It was a noble and generous sentiment which nations, like individuals, are never the worse for having felt. They were, I repeat it, ready to make great sacrifices for France. And why ready? Because she was fighting the battles of the human race against the combined enemies of their liberty; because she was performing the part which Great Britain now in fact sustains; forming the only bulwark against universal dominion. Knock away her Navy, and where are you? Under the naval despotism of France unchecked and unqualified by any antagonizing military power; at best but a change of masters. The tyrant of the ocean and the tyrant of the land is one and the same lord of all, and who shall say [to] him nay, or wherefore doest thou this thing? Give to the tiger the properties of the shark, and there is no longer safety for the beasts of the forest or the fishes of the sea. Where was this high anti-Britannic spirit of the gentleman from Pennsylvania, when his vote would have put an end to the British Treaty, that pestilent source of evil to this country? And at a time, too,

[1] *A. of C.*, 1805–07, v. 1, 561.

when it was not less the interest than the sentiment of this people to pull down Great Britain and exalt France. Then, when the gentleman might have acted with effect, he could not screw his courage to the sticking place. Then, England was combined in what has proven a feeble, inefficient coalition but which gave just cause of alarm to every friend of freedom. Now, the liberties of the human race are threatened by a single power more formidable than the coalesced world to whose utmost ambition, vast as it is, the naval force of Great Britain forms the only obstacle. . . . At the commencement of this session, we received a printed message from the President of the United States, breathing a great deal of national honor and indignation at the outrages we had endured, particularly from Spain. She was specially named and pointed at. She had pirated upon your commerce, imprisoned your citizens, violated your actual territory, invaded the very limits solemnly established between the two nations by the Treaty of San Lorenzo. Some of the State Legislatures (among others the very State on which the gentleman from Pennsylvania relies for support) sent forward resolutions, pledging their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor in support of any measures you might take in vindication of your injured rights. Well Sir what have you done?"[1]

And, having asked his question, Randolph answered it in such a manner as to render him an object of rabid animosity to James Sloan of New Jersey, a loyal Jeffersonian, for a long time to come.

"You have had resolutions laid upon your table, gone to some expense of printing and stationery—mere pen, ink, and paper, that's all. Like true political quacks you deal only in handbills and nostrums. Sir, I blush to see the record of our proceedings; they resemble nothing but the advertisements of patent medicines. Here you have 'the worm-destroying lozenges,' there 'Church's cough drops,' and, to crown the whole, 'Sloan's Vegetable Specific,' an infallible remedy for all nervous disorders and vertigoes of brain-sick politicians; each

[1] *A. of C.*, 1805–07, v. 1, 562.

man earnestly adjuring you to give his medicine only a fair trial. If, indeed, these wonder-working nostrums could perform but one-half of what they promise, there is little danger of our dying a political death at this time at least. But, Sir, in politics as in physics the doctor is ofttimes the most dangerous disease; and this I take to be our case at present. But, Sir, why do I talk of Spain? There are no longer Pyrenees. There exists no such nation; no such being as a Spanish King or Minister. It is a mere juggle, played off for the benefit of those who put the mechanism into motion. You know, Sir, that you have no differences with Spain; that she is the passive tool of a superior Power to whom at this moment you are crouching. Are your differences, indeed, with Spain? And where are you going to send your political panacea resolutions and handbills, your sole arcanum of Government, your King Cure-all? To Madrid? No—you are not such quacks as not to know where the shoe pinches—Paris. You know at least where the disease lies, and there you apply your remedy. When the nation anxiously demands the result of your deliberations, you hang your head and blush to tell. You are afraid to tell. Your mouth is hermetically sealed. Your honor has received a wound which must not take air."[1]

The cleverness of these covert allusions to the Executive project for purchasing Florida, which Randolph had arraigned, is apparent enough. There was a clever, satiric touch, too, in Randolph's words a little later on, when, contrasting the relative claims of visionary France and sober-sided England upon the good will of the United States, he inquired: "And what is there in the situation of England that invites to war with her? It is true she does not deal so largely in perfectibility but she supplies you with a much more useful commodity—with coarse woolens."[2] And, immediately in the track of his epigram followed one of those bold, illuminating statements of his which sometimes condensed more solid reasoning into a single sentence than is usually contained in pages of formal,

[1] *A. of C.*, 1805–07, v. 1, 563. [2] *Id.*, 567.

wiredrawn syllogisms. . . . Still speaking of England, Randolph said: "With less profession, indeed, she occupies the place of France in 1793. She is the sole bulwark of the human race against universal dominion; no thanks to her for it. In protecting her own existence, she insures theirs."[1] And worthy of Mirabeau or Vergniaud was the companion passage in which Randolph laid bare with the edge of a single rhetorical image the weakness of Napoleon at sea:

"Great Britain violates your flag on the high seas. What is her situation? Contending not for the dismantling of Dunkirk, for Quebec, or Pondicherry, but for London and Westminster—for life. Her enemy, violating at will the territories of other nations, acquiring thereby a colossal power that threatens the very existence of her rival. But she has one vulnerable point to the arms of her adversary which she covers with the ensigns of neutrality; ***she draws the neutral flag over the heel of Achilles.***"[2]

What his own conception of the demands of the hour was he made clear enough:

"Is it to be inferred," he asked, "from all this that I would yield to Great Britain? No. I would act towards her now as I was disposed to do towards France in 1798–9; treat with her and, for the same reason, on the same principles. Do I say I would treat with her? At this moment, you have a negotiation pending with her Government. With her you have not tried negotiation, and failed, totally failed as you have done with Spain, or rather France, and wherefore under such circumstances this hostile spirit to the one and this—I will not say what, to the other?"[3]

A little later, he gave out what he called his *projet* in these words:

[1] *A. of C.*, 1805–07, v. 1, 567.
[2] *Id.*, 568. [3] *Ibid.*

"Do you want to take up the cudgels where these great maritime states have been forced to drop them? To meet Great Britain on the ocean and drive her off its face? If you are so far gone as this, every capital measure of your policy has hitherto been wrong. You should have nurtured the old and devised new systems of taxation, and have cherished your navy. Begin this business when you may, land taxes, stamp-acts, window-taxes, hearth-money excise, in all its modifications of vexation and oppression, must precede or follow after. But, Sir, as French is the fashion of the day, I may be asked for my *projet*. I can readily tell gentlemen what I will not do. I will not propitiate any foreign nation with money. I will not launch into a naval war with Great Britain, although I am ready to meet her at the Cowpens or on Bunker's Hill; and for this plain reason, we are a great land animal, and our business is on shore. I will send her money, Sir, on no pretext whatever; much less on pretence of buying Labrador or Botany Bay, when my real object was to secure limits which she formally acknowledged at the peace of 1783. I go further: I would (if anything) have laid an embargo. This would have got our own property home and our adversary's into our power. If there is any wisdom left among us the first step towards hostility will always be an embargo."[1]

And then came this purple patch:

"But, Sir, it seems that we, who are opposed to this resolution, are men of no nerve who trembled in the days of the British treaty—cowards (I presume) in the Reign of Terror? Is this true? Hunt up the Journals; let our actions tell; we pursue our old, unshaken course. We care not for the nations of Europe, but make foreign relations bend to our political principles and subserve our country's interest. We have no wish to see another Actium or Pharsalia, or the lieutenants of a modern Alexander playing at piquet on all fours for the empire of the world. It is poor comfort to us to be told that France has too decided a taste for luxurious things to meddle with us; that Egypt is her object or the coast of

[1] *A. of C.*, 1805–07, v. 1, 571.

Barbary, and [that] at the worst we shall be the last devoured. We are enamoured with neither nation; we would play their own game upon them, use them for our interest and convenience; but, with all my abhorrence of the British Government, I should not hesitate between Westminster Hall and a Middlesex jury on the one hand, and the wood of Vincennes and a file of grenadiers on the other. That jury trial, which walked with Horne Tooke and Hardy through the flames of ministerial persecution, is, I confess, more to my taste than the trial of the Duke d'Enghien."[1]

And, with the end of the speech, came this additional sting in it for the administration:

"Until I came into the House this morning, I had been stretched on a sick bed, but, when I behold the affairs of this nation, instead of being where I hoped, and the people believed they were, in the hands of responsible men, committed to Tom, Dick, and Harry, to the refuse of the retail trade of politics, I do feel, I cannot help feeling, the most deep and serious concern. If the Executive Government would step forward and say, 'such is our plan, such is our opinion, and such are our reasons in support of it,' I would meet it fairly, would openly oppose or pledge myself to support it. But, without compass or polar Star, I will not launch into an ocean of unexplored measures which stand condemned by all the information to which I have access. The Constitution of the United States declares it to be the province and the duty of the President 'to give to Congress from time to time information of the state of the Union, and recommend to their consideration such measures as he shall judge expedient and necessary.' Has he done it? I know, Sir, that we may say, and do say, that we are independent (would it were true), as free to give a direction to the Executive as to receive it from him. But, do what you will, foreign relations, every measure short of war, and even the course of hostilities, depend upon him. He stands at the helm and must guide the vessel of

[1] *A. of C.*, 1805–07, v. 1, 573.

State. You give him money to buy Florida, and he purchases Louisiana. You may furnish means; the application of these means rests with him. Let not the master and mate go below when the ship is in distress and throw the responsibility upon the cook and the cabin boy. I said so when your doors were shut; I scorn to say less now that they are open."[1]

In a second speech on Gregg's resolution, Randolph put the same thought into somewhat different language: "We want the opinion of the doctor on the mode of treatment, and don't choose to be referred to the apothecary; because the superior does not choose to risk his reputation in a dubious case."[2]

Randolph's second speech on Gregg's resolution was delivered on March 6, 1806. His first was unquestionably one of the most brilliant speeches ever uttered in Congress; and the latter was but little its inferior. The former is also noticeable as containing his first open attack on Madison. It assumed the form of a disparaging reference to the latter's dissertation on the rights of neutrals, copies of which had been laid before members of the House. "If, Sir," said Randolph, "I were the foe—as I trust I am the friend of this nation—I would exclaim, 'Oh! that mine enemy would write a book!'"[3]; and, after holding the essay up to derision, he dashed the copy of it which he had in his hand violently down upon the floor of the House.

To his strictures on the production, Smilie, of Pennsylvania, who was an old man, replied that he ventured to say that, when the mortal part of Randolph and himself should be in ashes, the author of that work would be considered a great man. This withering observation might have silenced some more sensitive Congressman; but, if Randolph preserved any measure of silence with regard to the remark, it was only because he thought that a very few words would suffice to make it ridiculous.

[1] *A. of C.*, 1805–07, v. 1, 573. [2] *Id.*, 600. [3] *Id.*, 565.

"In an oracular saw," Randolph said, "he has pronounced that this book will live when he and I, too, Sir, are laid in our graves. But, when he considers his own age, and the frailty of my constitution, he will confess that he has allowed but a short span for the existence of his favorite work."[1]

Randolph also makes some observations in the "Decius" letters on the office assigned to the Committee of Ways and Means of the House in connection with the Annual Message which Jefferson laid before Congress two days before he also laid before it his special message on Spanish affairs. To this Committee was referred so much of the Annual Message as related to the conduct of the belligerent European Powers towards the United States and to the unjustifiable construction lately given by some of them to the laws of nations applicable to the rights of neutrals; and the reference was accompanied by instructions to the Committee to inquire in what particulars and to what extent our neutral rights had been violated, and to ascertain what legislative measures were required by the true interests of the United States to counteract such violations. Bidwell, who was seeking to supplant Randolph as the Democratic leader in the House, stoutly strove to have the reference made to a Select Committee; in which event he would have had charge of the investigation as Chairman.[2] But, for all practical purposes, the House at that time, as had been true ever since the first election of Macon as Speaker, was controlled by three men, the Speaker, Randolph, and Nicholson, the intimate friend of the Speaker and Randolph, and consequently to the Committee of Ways and Means was the reference made. It was afterwards alleged by Democratic members of the House, who had become hostile to Randolph, that he was inexcusably dilatory in rendering a report. Indeed, at the end of the session, Sloan accused him of the habit of arbitrarily pocketing bills and

[1] *A. of C.*, 1805–07, v. 1, 597.

[2] *Rich. Enq.*, Nov. 18, 1806, Decius' 3d Letter; *A. of C.*, 1805–7, v. 1, 258

holding back reports[1]; but, in the failure of the Secretary of State, Madison, to return a seasonable reply to questions put to him by Randolph, as Chairman of the Select Committee in regard to the Spanish Message, on account of his preoccupation with the task of writing his pamphlet on the rights of neutrals, and in a severe attack of illness experienced by Randolph besides, Randolph seems to have had a valid justification for the delay imputed to him by Sloan in connection with the Spanish Message.[2] On Jan. 29, 1806, when he was still sick and absent from his seat, the House on the motion of Smilie discharged the Committee of Ways and Means from the further consideration of so much of the President's Message as related to our neutral rights, so as to bring the matter referred to it before the House in Committee of the Whole.[3]

Before passing from the letters of "Decius," we might add that they attracted universal attention.[4] This, of course, was mainly because of the profound significance in both a public and a party sense of such a schism as that which the defection of Randolph had created in the Democratic party; but it was partly, too, because of the grave, dignified strain of high-minded remonstrance which ran through the letters, and which rarely fails to command general respect even when it does not command general acquiescence; and also partly because, like all of Randolph's public letters, they were well written. Among the replies to Randolph, was a temperate and able one signed "Cato," which appeared in the *Boston Chronicle*, and was ascribed by the *Richmond Enquirer* to Barnabas Bidwell.[5] We experience some difficulty in recognizing a man, whom Randolph had recently, in one of his speeches on Gregg's resolution, belittled, along with other New England Democrats, as a mussel, or a periwinkle on the strand, in the

[1] *A. of C.*, 1805–7, v. 1, 1112. [2] *Ibid.* [3] *Id.*, 409.
[4] *Rich. Enq.*, Sept. 2, 1806. [5] Oct. 24, 1806.

stately, toga-clad figure which rises up before us in the beginning of Bidwell's reply.

"From internal evidence, there is some reason to believe that you are Mr. Randolph himself, presented in a Roman dress; but, whether you are or not, as you have thought proper to assume the signature of 'Decius,' I take the liberty to address you as a newspaper writer, and shall annex to these cursory observations the assumed name of another ancient Roman."[1]

And it is but just to "Cato" to say that he not only handled his short sword and his shield with admirable adroitness but with a degree of generosity which was not often characteristic of ancient warfare. Speaking of, or rather at, Randolph, and of the insurgent Democrats grouped about him, he says:

"Without him, indeed, it is believed that no such division would have been known in the history of American parties. The splendor of his reputation, the brilliancy of his eloquence, his long experience in the House, his former services, while coöperating with the Republican majority, his bold invectives, his perseverance and zeal had their weight with a number of his personal and political friends, who, together with the whole little phalanx of Federalists, supported him with their votes."[2]

If this letter was really written by Bidwell, his contemporaries, we should say, placed a lower estimate upon his abilities than his deserts warranted. He was in Congress but one term—from 1805–07—and brought with him to the House such a high local reputation as an orator that he would have been the Chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means, instead of Randolph, if the efforts of the more obsequious adherents of Jefferson at the beginning of the Ninth Congress to defeat the election of Macon

[1] *Rich. Enq.*, Oct. 24, 1806. [2] *Ibid.*

to the Speakership had been successful.[1] But, like many another local phenomenon who has found himself in Congress, he was soon set down as a man whose shop did not bear out the promise of his show window. "As a popular speaker, he never can stand as the rival of John Randolph," was the comment of John Quincy Adams on him, after the effect of the Chase impeachment on his feelings about Randolph had somewhat worn off, and he had heard Bidwell in the House.[2] Poor Bidwell! his rising, his fleeting meridian, and his setting have all been mercilessly set forth by Edmund Quincy, the biographer of the eminent Federalist, Josiah Quincy, who was one of Bidwell's fellow-Congressman.

"He graduated at Yale college in 1785, and was a lawyer in the western part of Massachusetts. He had been a very active Democratic politician, and brought a very high reputation with him to Washington; and his advent was hailed by the Jeffersonians as that of a great accession of strength to their party. Randolph was especially curious to know what manner of man this new antagonist might be, of whose prowess such tales were told. Accordingly on the occasion of Bidwell's maiden speech, as my father used to tell the story, Randolph was in his place, which commanded that of the new member, and gave him a profound attention; but, as has often happened before, the performance of the new actor did not come up to the expectations excited by the flourish of trumpets which had announced his entrance upon the scene. Mr. Bidwell, though undoubtedly a man of ability in some sort, was not an orator as Randolph was, but dull and heavy both in matter and manner. Randolph soon made up his mind about him, and took a characteristic way of letting the House know his opinion. He was dressed in his usual morning costume—his skeleton legs cased in tight-fitting leather-breeches and top-boots, with a blue riding coat and thick buckskin gloves from which he was never parted, and a heavily loaded riding whip in his hand.

[1] *Life of Quincy*, 94.
[2] *Memoirs*, Mar. 8, 1806, v. 1, 419.

After listening attentively for about a quarter of an hour, he rose deliberately, settled his hat on his head, and walked slowly out of the House, striking the handle of his whip emphatically upon the palm of his left hand, and regarding poor Bidwell as he passed him with a look of insolent contempt, as much as to say: 'I have taken your measure, Sir, and shall give myself no further concern about you.' It helped to extinguish effectually the new light from which the administration had hoped so much. Mr. Bidwell acquired no weight in the House, and left Congress at the end of his term in 1807, and took the office of Attorney General of Massachusetts, which he held until 1810. At that time, some financial catastrophe overtook him which rendered his emigration to Canada convenient if not necessary. There he lived until his death in 1833."[1] (*a*)

There is also testimony, though this is Federalist testimony too, to the effect that, when Bidwell left Congress, he had been to a noticeable degree cowed by the tongue and imperious temper of the man whose leadership he had coveted. "Bidwell," Senator Benjamin Tallmadge, of Connecticut, wrote to Dr. Manasseh Cutler, "is manifestly not a little mortified, and speaks but rarely, especially when R. [Randolph] is present."[2]

With what we have said about the Spanish Message episode as a gloss, the meaning of the attacks, overt and covert, made by Randolph on the Jefferson administration in his speeches on Gregg's resolution becomes plain enough. It is observable that in the first of these speeches he had nothing to say on the burning issue of the impressment of American sailors by British captains. And he was, of course, taunted with the fact, but he hastened to assure the House that it was due only to a slip of the memory and to repair the omission.[3] His position on that subject is very fully and clearly stated in the third letter of "Decius."[4]

[1] *Life of Quincy*, 95.
[2] Feb. 19, 1806, *Life of Dr. Cutler*, v. 2, 326.
[3] *A. of. C.*, 1805–7, v. 1, 596.
[4] *Rich. Enq.*, Nov. 18, 1806.

"Mr. John Randolph was of opinion that the impressment of our seamen furnished just cause of indignant resentment on our part; but he saw no reason for pushing that matter to extremity at this time which had not existed in as full force for the last five or even twelve years. Our government, in consideration of the great number of British seamen in our employment, and of the identity of language and manner between that class of their subjects and the same description of our citizens, but above all from motives of sound policy (too obvious to need recapitulation), had hitherto deemed it expedient to temporize on this interesting and delicate topic; he could see no just ground at present for departing from this system; more especially pending an actual negotiation between the two governments on the point in dispute."[1]

There can be little doubt that Gregg's resolution would have been adopted by the House if it had received the support of Jefferson; but its adoption would have meant a loss to the Treasury of $5,000,000 a year. Gallatin, the Secretary of the Treasury, naturally enough preferred limited to unlimited restrictions on our commerce with England; and, though compelled by the pressure of public opinion to rattle the sword a little in his last messages to Congress, Jefferson did not lose sight of the fact that war is the probable sequel of the total refusal of one country to trade with another. From first to last, his policy was to avoid actual war with England, if it could be done without positive national dishonor. The introduction of Gregg's resolution was followed a few days later, perhaps at the instance of Gallatin, by another resolution introduced by Nicholson which prohibited the importation into the United States of only such British goods as we might derive from other countries or produce ourselves.[2] In favor of this resolution, Jefferson, who never shrank from a contest with rebellion in his party when it was really necessary to

[1] *Rich. Enq.*, Nov. 18, 1806.
[2] *A. of C.*, 1805–7, v. 1, 451.

quell rebellion, did take a stand, and what that meant any historian who is familiar with the use of patronage by which he helped to secure the repeal of the Federal Judiciary Law, and the many other forms of artful conciliation besides the seductive distribution of offices, to say nothing of occasional applications of downright force, by which he was in the habit of maintaining discipline and cohesion in the ranks of his party, ought to be able to declare without difficulty.

Knowing that Nicholson and Macon were, next to Randolph, the most formidable of the Democrats in the House who had come to be known as "the Old Republicans" he sought by different means to keep them both from making common cause with Randolph. This was not a difficult thing to do in the case of Nicholson. He had a sincere affection for Randolph and did not like Madison, but to Gallatin he was bound both by ties of marriage and personal intimacy. He was, besides, a man of slender means and, the head of a growing family, and was finding that his service in Congress was impairing his ability to earn an adequate income for his needs. (*a*) To Nicholson Jefferson offered a judicial position, and the offer was accepted, and Randolph was deprived in this talented and honorable man of little less than his right arm. (*Hist. of U. S.*, by Adams, viii, 167.) But did Jefferson have anything to do with this matter? (*b*) No one knew better than Jefferson that Macon was a Cincinnatus who could be neither browbeaten nor bought, and that there was no way of influencing him except by soothing assurances of unbroken friendship.

"Some enemy whom we know not is sowing tares between us," the President wrote to him coaxingly. "Between you and myself nothing but opportunities of explanation can be necessary to defeat these endeavors. At least on my part, my confidence in you is so unqualified that nothing further is necessary for my satisfaction."[1]

[1] March 22, 1806, Jeff. MSS.

Nor did Jefferson forget that Monroe was the chief instrument upon which Randolph relied for the purpose of bringing back the Democratic party to its pristine purity and preventing the election of Madison to the Presidency as the successor of Jefferson.

"Some of your new friends," Jefferson wrote to him, "are attacking your old ones out of friendship for you, but in a way to render you great injury. . . . Mr. Nicholson's Resolution will be passed this week, probably by a majority of 100 Republicans against 15 Republicans and 27 Federalists."[1]

Indeed, there can be little doubt that Jefferson's placable and generous temper would cheerfully have pardoned even Randolph's offences if the latter had not exacted impossibilities. Jefferson was too great a man, and too conscious of his greatness to be jealous of anyone who was not an Alexander Hamilton (if he was ever jealous of him); and, while there is little, if any, evidence to show that Randolph ever shared his confidence in the closet as Gallatin and Madison did, there *is* evidence that Jefferson felt a high degree of admiration for Randolph's peculiar talents and observed with sincere pleasure the course of his swift and brilliant ascent to parliamentary leadership. But Randolph detested Madison because of his inclination towards the Yazoo Compromise, and for other reasons. It was a saying of his that Madison was as mean a man for a Virginian as John Quincy Adams was for a Yankee.[2] And it was a point of cardinal importance in his posture towards the Jefferson Administration that Madison should be sacrificed as a candidate for the Presidency. But such was the deep-rooted respect and affection entertained by Jefferson for Madison that to this part of Randolph's plans, it is safe to say, nothing could have induced him to accede. Under the circumstances, after shelving Nichol-

[1] Mar. 16, 1806, Jeff. MSS.

[2] *Famous Americans*, by Parton, 201.

son, coaxing Macon, warning Monroe and, doubtless, dressing up his broken alignment at still other weak points, there was nothing for him to do except to bring what Randolph in the "Decius" letters calls his "colossal popularity"[1] to bear with crushing effect upon Randolph.

Nicholson's resolution was adopted on March 17, and was sent to a special committee to be reduced to the form of a bill. It was adopted by a vote of 87 to 35.[2]

"Mr. Randolph," Jefferson took care to inform Monroe in a second letter, "withdrew before the question was put." "I have never seen a House of Representatives," he added, "more solidly united in doing what they believed to be the best for the public interest. There can be no better proof than the fact that so eminent a leader should at once and almost unanimously be abandoned."[3]

But when the Non-importation Bill based on Nicholson's resolution was subsequently reported and passed by a vote of 93 to 32,[4] with a provision postponing its actual operation until quite far in the future, Randolph, who, aside from all secondary incentives, had the genuine hatred of a thoroughly sincere and resolute man for all disingenuous and faint-hearted measures, did not let it pass by him until he had hit off its true character in one of those happy phrases which so often stuck in the memory of his hearers with the tenacious hold of the Spanish needles or cockle burrs which caused so much annoyance to the sportsman in the Staunton River lowgrounds. "Never in the course of my life," he said, "have I witnessed such a scene of indignity and inefficiency as this measure holds forth to the world. What is it? A milk and water bill! A dose of chicken broth to be taken nine months hence!"[5]

And it is scarcely too much to affirm that from that time

[1] *Rich. Enq.*, Aug. 15, 1806.
[2] *A. of C.*, 1805–7, v. 1, 823.
[3] March 18, 1806, Jeff. MSS.
[4] *A. of C.*, 1805–7, v. 1, 877.
[5] *Id.*, 851; Mar. 26, 1806.

until the first session of the Ninth Congress ended it was hard to determine whether Jefferson or Randolph dominated the House. The alternations of militancy and meekness, the indecision which had distinguished the policy of our State Department towards France and England, gave Randolph an advantage which he was quick to turn to the annoyance of the Jefferson administration in numerous ways. He became as vexatious to it as the "terrible cornet of horse," William Pitt, whom he admired so extravagantly, promised to be to Sir Robert Walpole.

"For two months," Henry Adams truly says, "he controlled the House by audacity and energy of will. The Crowninshields, Varnums, and Bidwells of New England, the Sloans, Smilies, and Findleys of the Middle States could do nothing with him; but by the time he had done with them they were bruised and sore, mortified, angry, and ridiculous."[1] (*a*)

And Adams might have added that the Jacksons and Thomas Mann Randolphs of the Southern States could do nothing with him either but arouse in him a spirit that might readily have given them an opportunity to face him on a field where their inferiority to him might not have been so pronounced as it was upon the floor of Congress.

"The schism," Senator Benjamin Tallmadge reported to the Rev. Dr. Cutler, "which has taken place between Northern and Southern Democrats looks to be of the irreconcilable nature that it never can be healed. J. Randolph and some of his fast friends lead the Southern junto; while Bidwell, General Varnum, Crowninshield, and General Thomas [David Thomas of New York] appear to manage the Northern Phalanx. In many trials of strength, their force has appeared to be so nearly balanced that the weight of the little Federalist band has given a preponderating turn to the balance. In some contests, Randolph has kept the field of argument alone against the whole host of his guards or brethren, and even silenced their

[1] *Hist. of U. S.*, v. 3, 173.

batteries. His attacks have been general or personal, as best suited his purpose, and, in some of his philippics, the gall of his heart was poured forth without mixture. Epithets have in consequence attached to certain characters which they cannot shake off, and which we sometimes think prevent them from *overmuch talking*. You will undoubtedly recollect the peculiar nasal sound of General ——'s voice. Randolph called it a 'sepulchral tone,' [which] 'in the language of the Common Prayer Book might be either said or sung.' General Varnum he has styled *sworn interpreter of Presidential messages*, etc."[1]

And then Senator Tallmadge adds the comment on the wilted self-importance of Bidwell which we have already quoted. A few weeks later, after a motion had been made to postpone indefinitely the consideration of a resolution offered by Randolph to remove the ban of secrecy resting upon the members of the House in relation to the Spanish Message of the President, Senator Tallmadge wrote again to Dr. Cutler as follows: "This brought up Smilie, Findley, Eppes, Bidwell, Early, etc., but Randolph silenced them all."[2] Indeed, at times, the mouth-pieces of the Jefferson administration in the House felt too harried to break silence at all. "It is a matter of great astonishment to me," were the words of Wilson Cary Nicholas to Jefferson on one occasion, "that such a philippic as we have seen could have been uttered in Congress and not one word said in justification of the administration."[3] More than once, in his utter indifference to the number of his antagonists, when he was making his furious onslaughts on them, Randolph indulged in a degree of license which caused Sloan on the last day of the session to speak of him as "a petted, vindictive school-boy," or, "a maniac in his straight-jacket, accidentally broke out of his cell."[4] In his

[1] Feb. 19, 1806, *Life, etc., of Dr. Cutler*, v. 2, 326.
[2] *Id.*, v. 2, 327.
[3] Apr. 2, 1806, Jeff. MSS.
[4] *A. of C.*, 1805–7, v. 1, 1110.

labored, prolix arraignment, Sloan alleged that, on one occasion, Randolph had invaded the Speaker's chair, shut his fist, and, pointing directly to another member of the House, in an imperious tone of voice not only ordered him to sit down but to go down the back stairs; and that, on another occasion, Randolph had called another member an old, toothless driveller, superannuated, and in his second dotage.[1] (*a*) Two days after the passage of Nicholson's Non-Importation Bill, the House took up certain resolutions offered by Randolph which asserted that a contractor under the government was a civil officer and as such incapable of holding a seat in the House, and stigmatized as unconstitutional the union of civil and military authority in the same person.[2] One of his fellow members, Matthew Lyon, had entered into mail contracts with the government, and John Smith, one of the Senators from Ohio, was a contractor on a large scale for army supplies; and General Wilkinson, whom John Randolph was to loathe so ineffably, was exercising both civil and military powers at St. Louis. Such resolutions, of course, placed their Democratic victims in very much the same situation as that of the prisoner in Poe's Tale, who could not escape the pit in his gradually contracting prison without coming into contact with the fiery walls that were closing in on him, and could not escape these walls without toppling over into the pit. If they voted against the resolutions, they would be recreant to the fundamental principles of the Democratic creed; if they voted for them, they would be talking about halters in the house of the thief. Crafty resolutions of this kind have been brought to quite a pitch of perfection in the parliamentary practice of modern times, but, in the early career of John Randolph, they were perhaps not so common. The Democratic majority had to gulp its principles to defeat the resolutions, and Randolph forced it to gulp as well a bill which ren-

[1] *A. of C.*, 1805-7, v. 1, 1111. [2] *Id.*, 880.

dered military and naval officers incompetent to hold any civil offices.

On March 29, the Senate sent a bill to the House providing for the settlement of the Yazoo claims which had passed the Senate by a vote of 19 to 11,[1] after James Jackson, who had again become a member of that body had sunk into his grave. As soon as it lifted up its head in the House, Randolph pounced upon it with all the old vicious energy, and this time with an outspoken frankness which not only did not spare the President, but took in practically the entire House itself. "The whole weight of the Executive government presses it on," he said. "We cannot bear up against it. The whole Executive government has had a bias to the Yazoo interest ever since I had a seat here." The Yazoo business, he declared, was the head of the divisions among the Republican party; it was the secret and covert cause of the whole; and, if the bill was postponed over Sunday, the secret mechanism which everybody knew would be brought to bear on it so powerfully that he would not give a farthing for the issue. Gentlemen would come in with speeches ready cut-and-dried until a majority would dwindle to nothing.[2] Ordinarily, such language could not fail to have a powerful effect in turning the jealous pride of a legislative assembly against the speaker, but, under the moral effect of Randolph's righteous and disinterested wrath, "Yazoo" in his mouth had become a word of irresistible potency. With him was Milton's "strong siding champion, Conscience," addressing a stirring appeal not only to his own honorable nature but to the moral instincts of the country at large; and the bill was rejected by a vote of 62 to 54.[3] After the vote was announced, Randolph arose and exultingly stated that the feelings of the deceased Senator from Georgia, James Jackson, had been so deeply involved in the fate of

[1] *A. of C.*, 1805–7; v. 1, 208.
[2] *Id.*, 909, 912, 913. [3] *Id.* 920.

the bill that its defeat might be regarded as his resurrection.[1]

Another triumph was secured by Randolph when the injunction of secrecy, imposed upon the proceedings of the House with respect to the Spanish Message, was removed.[2] In accomplishing this object he was aided by the Federalists and about 30 Republicans. When the Journal was published, and he found that it did not contain the Spanish Message, he moved that the Message too should be given publicity, and narrated the history of his own interviews with the President and the Secretary of State in regard to its subject.[3] On this occasion, his language was somewhat restrained, but, on a later day, he cut loose from every consideration of reticence and broke finally with the administration in these words:

"I came here prepared to coöperate with the Government in all its measures. I told them so. But I soon found there was no choice left, and that to coöperate in them would be to destroy the national character. I found I might coöperate or be an honest man. I have therefore opposed and will oppose them. Is there an honest man disposed to be the go-between and to carry down secret messages to this House? No. It is because men of character cannot be found to do this business that agents must be got to carry things into effect which men of uncompromitted character will not soil their fingers or sully their characters with."[4]

Of Madison he had taken perpetual leave in his first speech. After recalling the declaration that Madison had made with reference to paying France for asserting her influence over her minion, Spain, Randolph said:

"From the moment I heard that declaration, all the objections I originally had to the procedure were aggravated to the highest possible degree. I considered it a base prostration of the national character to excite one nation by money to bully

[1] *A. of C.*, 1805–7; v. 1, 921. [2] *Id.*, 1143. [3] *Id.*, 946, 949. [4] *Id.*, 984.

another nation out of its property, and from that moment, and to the last moment of my life, my confidence in the principles of the man entertaining these sentiments died never to live again."[1]

Randolph went too far, however, when in one of his speeches in this debate he accused Madison of attempting to procure money from the Treasury for his negotiation with France without awaiting an appropriation by Congress, and declared that the documents "if published, would fix a stain upon some men in the Government and high in office which all the waters in the ocean would not wash out."[2] This charge was disproved, though there had been a suggestion by Jefferson which might readily have been distorted by rumor into a specious foundation for it, and, with other things that Randolph had said about Madison, elicited from Mrs. Madison's brother-in-law, John G. Jackson, an irate speech, which, with a slight difference of wording, might have culminated in a duel. In the course of this speech, he referred to Randolph as his colleague, and was interrupted by the latter with the disdainful interjection: "I am not the gentleman's colleague." "Very well," replied Jackson, and continuing referred to Randolph as "John Randolph" only to be interrupted by the Speaker, who said it was out of order to call gentlemen by name in the House. "Sir," answered Jackson with a happy promptitude to which more than one tingling scalp in the House gave a responsive assent, "I know of no more appropriate appellation unless it is 'the descendant of Powhatan.' "[3]

The influence of Randolph was again felt a little later when the annual appropriations for the Navy came along, and, as he had a strong dislike for Robert Smith, the Secretary of the Navy, and his brother Samuel Smith, one of the Senators from Maryland, he was all the quicker to exert

[1] *A. of C.*, 1805–07, v. 1, 947. [2] *Id.*, 985. [3] *Id.*, 988.

it in this case. The Navy estimates were pared down to very narrow limits, and, beyond an appropriation for a considerable number of gunboats, the recommendations of the President in relation to the upbuilding of the Navy were disregarded. The theory of Randolph and the other old Republicans in reference to the relations between Great Britain and the United States was, as Randolph's speeches on Gregg's Resolution showed, akin to that which afterwards caused Bismarck to deprecate talk about a war between Great Britain and Germany as talk about a war between an elephant and a whale. How indefensible such a theory was became apparent enough a few years later during the War of 1812, when our fleet, small as it was, won for itself a measure of naval glory which even the victors of Trafalgar could not despise. In his remarks on the Naval Appropriation bill, Randolph said that such a bill was a mere matter of form; that the items might as well be lumped together; that Robert Smith, the Secretary of the Navy, would, if he chose, spend twice as much money as he had done the year before, and that the House would have to make up the deficiency. "A spendthrift," said he, "never could be supplied with money fast enough to anticipate his wants."[1]

Another step by Randolph that brought embarrassment to the administration was a bill introduced by him for the repeal of the salt tax and the continuance of the Mediterranean Fund; a special fund which Congress had provided for the exigencies created by the piratical depredations of the Barbary Powers.[2] It was hard, of course, for any good Democrat not to unite in the repeal of a tax on such a common necessity of life as salt. The bill was passed by a vote of 84 to 11 and sent to the Senate,[3] whence it returned to the House with the provisions relating to the salt tax eliminated,[4] only to be met by the

[1] *A. of C.*, 1805–7, v. 1, 998, 1005.
[2] *Id.*, 1028. [3] *Id.*, 1067. [4] *Id.*, 1094–95.

insistence of the House upon the bill in its original form. The result was a committee of conference, the refusal of the Senate to recede, a motion by Randolph that the House adhere to its own bill, and a situation that put the Mediterranean Fund itself in jeopardy. Randolph's motion did not prevail, but, by the time it was beaten by the close vote of 47 to 40, the passions of the House were aglow to such an extent that Randolph himself was compelled to ask:

"But what has thrown us into this heat? Is it the dinner we have just eaten?", and to follow up his questions with these mollifying words: "I did hope that, whatever contumely or hostility may have been manifested during the earlier period of the session, we would have thrown in the last moments of it neither the splenetic temper of age or youth, but that we should have parted like men not ashamed of what we had done or afraid to meet the public award."[1]

But these conciliatory words were totally lost upon Thomas Mann Randolph, the son-in-law of Jefferson, from whom Randolph had long been estranged. His temper was as irascible as that of a Roanoke yellow-jacket, and, too transported by anger to hear anything except what his anger prompted, he rose from his seat, under the honest but totally unfounded impression that the use of the word "contumely" and other words by Randolph were intended to have an offensive application to himself, and, after acknowledging that in point of talents there was between John Randolph and himself an immeasurable distance, declared that he had long observed that John Randolph was much more prudent of speech outside of the House than when protected by the shield of its dignity. Then, after uttering some other foolish things, he concluded by proclaiming that he entertained the same principles and sentiments with reference to points of honor

[1] *A. of C.*, 1805–07, v. 1, 1094, 1095, 1096, 1099, 1100, 1101, 1103.

that John Randolph did, and that he had always thought and always should think that lead and even steel made very proper ingredients in serious quarrels.[1] As soon as this explosion ended, James M. Garnett, a member of Congress from Virginia, and one of John Randolph's intimate friends, at the latter's request, waited upon Thomas Mann Randolph and asked him whether his observations were intended for John Randolph, and, upon being told that they were, informed him that John Randolph expected him to meet him; whereupon Thomas Mann Randolph replied that he was ready to do so, but that, if John Randolph would only say that he meant no allusion to him, there was no apology which a man of honor could or ought to make which he would not be ready to offer. When these circumstances were communicated to John Randolph, he observed that the course which his opponent had chosen to pursue precluded any sort of declaration or acknowledgment on his part, and that Thomas Mann Randolph should choose some friend with whom Garnett might converse further on the subject. This Thomas Mann Randolph did in the person of Isaac A. Coles, of Albemarle County, Virginia, who, after a short conversation with his principal, gave the same assurance to Garnett that his principal had already given to him. The reply of Garnett was that he had no doubt that Thomas Mann Randolph was laboring under an entire misconception as to what his principal had said, but that, after what had passed, his principal would make no statement whatever, and that, if Thomas Mann Randolph could not reconcile it to himself to make a suitable apology, John Randolph would expect him to meet him either *that night*, "which he preferred," or in the morning.[2] It is said that, when John Randolph first applied to Garnett as his second, the latter endeavored to dissuade him from asking an explanation from Thomas Mann Randolph, but that John Randolph

[1] *A. of C.*, 1805–07, v. 1, 1104. [2] *Rich. Enq.*, June 17, 1806.

replied that his resolution was irrevocably taken, that perhaps he had cause on the whole to be obliged to Thomas Mann Randolph, that he had long been a target for every worthless scoundrel in the House to aim his shafts at, and that Thomas Mann Randolph by this unprovoked and studied outrage had given him an opportunity to answer them all in the person of an adversary who would not disgrace his contest, and under circumstances in which no possible blame could attach to him.[1]

And this, gentle reader, is the circumspect individual who, we are told by Henry Adams, "never pressed a quarrel to the end," and, who, Adams insinuates, was always careful to take the measure of his man before assuming an aggressive port towards him.[2]

Fortunately, the inflexibly rigid attitude of Randolph was never communicated to his adversary by Coles, because when he looked up his principal he found that, assured by friends whose tempers were not so delicately suspended as his own that he had gone off at half-cock, Thomas Mann Randolph was on his feet in the House making the *amende honorable* to John Randolph. When it was passed on to John Randolph, who was in another part of the capitol, by Garnett, the former requested the latter to state to Coles that he received Thomas Mann Randolph's apology and had no further commands for that gentleman; which Garnett did.[3] There is a French saying, however, that it is not the pistols but the seconds that kill; and subsequently it looked, for a time, as if the controversy between the two Randolphs might prove an illustration of its truth. The fire which it kindled, as often happens in the case of other fire, started up anew from its embers, and a series of statements on the subject in the *Richmond Enquirer*, made by persons who had been connected in one secondary way or another with the affair,

[1] *Rich. Enq*, July 4, 1806.
[2] *J. R.*, 260. [3] *Rich. Enq.*, June 17, 1806.

occasioned enough apprehension in the mind of Jefferson to induce him to send a line of caution to his son-in-law. This letter is mentioned in a letter from him to James Ogilvie, in which he used these words, so highly characteristic of the free movement of his mind in its relations to every subject:

"It is not inclination in anybody but a fear of the opinion of the world which leads men to the absurd and immoral decision of difference by duel. The greatest service, therefore, which Mr. Randolph's friends can render him, is to convince him that, although the world esteems courage and disapproves of the want of it, yet, in a case like his, and, especially when it has been before put out of doubt, the mass of mankind, and particularly that thinking part whose esteem we value, would condemn in a husband and father of a numerous family everything like forwardness in this barbarous and lawless appeal."[1]

Randolph did not lose his position as Chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means until after the end of the 9th Congress, but his formal leadership of the Democrats in the House did not survive the first session of that Congress. On July 5, 1806, in a letter to Bidwell, Jefferson wrote that it was only speaking a truth to say that all eyes looked to him as the future leader of the House.[2]

The causes which produced Randolph's estrangement from the Jefferson Administration have been the subject of much conjecture. By Sawyer, in his highly inaccurate, but interesting, biography of Randolph (*a*), it has been ascribed to the circumstance that Bidwell and not Randolph was selected by Jefferson as the conduit for the transmission to Congress of his secret intentions in regard to the Florida purchase.[3] But this idea overlooks the suggestion that there must have been already a serious rift in the relations between Jefferson and Randolph for

[1] June 23, 1806, *Writings*, Mem. Ed., v. 18, 248.
[2] Jefferson MSS. [3] Sawyer, 26.

Jefferson to have selected Bidwell at all. The estrangement has also been ascribed to the fact that Jefferson had refused the application of Christopher Clark and several of his Virginia colleagues in the House, asking for the appointment of Randolph to the English Mission. Randolph had nothing to do with this application, and was not privy to it when made, but the fact that it had been made and rejected became known to him subsequently, and must have had a more or less corrosive effect on a nature so proud and resentful as his.[1] It is by no means certain that he did not become cognizant of the application after it had been made and before it was rejected; for in a letter from Nancy Randolph to him which we shall hereafter insert in these pages, she speaks of his elation, after the termination of the Chase trial, with the prospect of a foreign mission, and says: "Your expected voyage enchanted you so much that you could not help talking of it even to your dear nephew. 'Soon, my boy, we shall be sailing over the Atlantic.'" The reasons, given by George Tucker in his *Life of Jefferson* for the refusal of Jefferson to make the appointment, are concisely stated in these words:

"They (Jefferson and Madison) had seen enough of Mr. Randolph to know that his defects of temper rendered him unfit for such a situation—that he could neither be expected to yield implicit obedience to the views of those who employed him, nor be capable of the address or patient research or temperate logic for effecting them."[2]

Tucker was an ardent Jeffersonian, but, even taking his words at their full worth, do they not imply previous conditions under which Randolph's shortcomings might have already rendered his footing with the Jefferson administration but a precarious one? It is true that on Feb. 22,

[1] *Life of Jefferson*, by Tucker, v. 2, 208.
[2] *Jefferson*, by Tucker, v. 2, 208.

1805, Randolph wrote to St. George Tucker that he was then on terms of the greatest friendship and intimacy with Jefferson and Gallatin; though he was not therefore the less independent in his sentiments and votes[1]; but this very letter was written to allay anxiety about the effect of his Yazoo speeches on the mind of the administration. There is evidence tending to prove that, shortly after the first triumph of the Democratic party, Randolph was restive under the commanding leadership of Jefferson, and disposed to reserve for himself a degree of independence and initiative incompatible with the measure of deference due by a party leader in the House to a President of the same party as himself. And there is also evidence tending to prove that Jefferson early realized after he became President that Randolph might at any time kick over the traces. So far as Madison and Gallatin were concerned, it is inconceivable that, after the Yazoo speeches delivered by Randolph in the House, their good will should not have been sensibly alienated from him, or that Randolph should not have recognized that, in view of the close intimacy between them and Jefferson, this alienation was bound to have its effect upon Jefferson too. Even so far back as Dec. 17, 1800, Randolph wrote to Nicholson: "I need not say how much I would prefer J. [Jefferson] to B. [Burr], but I am not like some of our party who are as much devoted to him as the Feds were to General Washington. I am not a monarchist in any sense. If our salvation depends on a *single* man, 'tis not worth our attention."[2] Nicholson evidently thought that this smacked a little of disloyalty, and Randolph felt it necessary to explain his meaning.

"There are," he said in another letter to Nicholson on Jan. 1, 1801, "those men who support Republicans from *monarchical* principles, and, if the head of that very great and truly

[1] Lucas MSS. [2] Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

good and wise man can be turned with adulatory nonsense, they will endeavor to persuade him that our salvation depends on an individual. This is the essence of monarchy; and with this doctrine I have been, am, ever will be at issue."[1]

In the debates over the repeal of the Federal Judiciary Act, when twitted by Bayard with being a mere tool of Jefferson, Randolph was quick to pledge the support of his friends and himself to any measure that Bayard might bring forward to protect the independence of Congress against the Executive influence, of which the Virginian statesmen of Randolph's school had such a haunting horror. And about the same time that he wrote to Judge Tucker that he was on terms of the greatest friendship and intimacy with Jefferson and Gallatin,[2] he used these ominous words in a letter to Nicholson:

"As Mr. J. is again seated in the saddle for four years with a prospect of selection for life, the whole force of the adversaries of the man, and what is of more moment, of his *principles*, will be bent to take advantage of the easy credulity of his temper, and thus arm themselves with power to set both at defiance as soon as their schemes are ripe for execution. I do not like the aspect of affairs."[3]

On Nov. 30, 1803, Randolph had occasion to write to Jefferson, disclaiming any intent to apply certain remarks, which he had made in the House, to him, and expressing the veneration, in which he had always held and still held Jefferson's character.[4] The reply was the kindly one which might always be expected from Jefferson under such circumstances. Nevertheless, it is not difficult to read a mild admonition between some of the lines of his letter.

"I see," he said, "too many proofs of the imperfection of human reason to entertain wonder or intolerance at any differ-

[1] Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong. [2] Lucas MSS.
[3] Apr. 30, 1805, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong. [4] Libr. Cong.

ence of opinion on any subject; and acquiesce in that difference as easily as on a difference of feature or form; experience having long taught me the reasonableness of mutual sacrifices of opinion among those who are to act together for any common object and the expediency of doing what good we can when we cannot do all we would wish."[1]

Nor was it long after the accession of the Democratic party to power before it became apparent that Randolph was dissatisfied with its failure to live up to the standards of conduct which it had inculcated when it was in a minority. By nature and training, he was a purist in public affairs, though not a visionary or enthusiast; for that was not his turn of mind at all. (*a*) Indeed, he was the advocate of no principles of public conduct that ought not to be practically attainable under popular institutions. (*b*) He was innately too proud and self-respecting to tolerate readily low standards of public behavior, and he was sprung from a political aristocracy, based on freehold suffrage, which sincerely believed it to be the highest of all distinctions to serve the public and to serve it well, and which engaged in the rivalries of politics subject to a strict code of honorable conduct. There was a flavor of highbred simplicity and integrity about his political creed, and his fastidious sense of public obligation made it difficult for him to subordinate his refined scruples to the drab, and often squalid, concessions and compromises necessitated by the practical exigencies of politics. He shrank from political intrigue; he had nothing but scorn for the abuses of patronage. Removed by the possession of a large estate, peculiarly of a nature to foster pride of character, from one of the sources of political subserviency, he found it difficult to understand the prudential considerations which many men in public life less happily circumstanced, in point of fortune, were compelled to consult. It was these charac-

[1] Dec. 1, 1803, *Writings*, Mem. Ed., v. 10, 436.

teristics, along with his eloquence and force of will, which gave Randolph an ascendancy over his Virginia Colleagues in the House, that even the imposing prestige and great popularity of Jefferson and the influence of Executive patronage were at times powerless to withstand; which carried with him on the Yazoo question every one of the Republicans in the House from Virginia (including Eppes and Thomas Mann Randolph, the President's sons-in-law) but two, and one of them, Jackson, Mrs. Madison's brother-in-law,[1] and on the resolutions, relating to the Florida purchase, in which Jefferson's control over his party was directly involved, twelve out of the twenty-two members of the House from Virginia.[2]

"Still in Virginian eyes the truest and ablest Republican in Congress, the representative of power and principle, the man of the future," Henry Adams says of Randolph as he was at the time of his first speech on Gregg's resolution, "Randolph stood with the halo of youth, courage, and genius around his head—a sort of Virginian Saint Michael—almost terrible in his contempt for whatever seemed to him base or untrue."[3]

But Randolph's point of view was very different from that of the Northern Democrats, though no more disinterested and elevated than the point of view from which many Federalists reached their conclusions. The Northern Democrats were in every moral and intellectual respect inferior to the Federalists. It is a hard, perhaps a too hard, picture which Henry Adams draws of them as they were in 1804; but it is far from being an absolutely overdrawn one.

"The new Democrats in New England, New York, and Ohio were Federalists in disguise, and cared nothing for fine-spun constitutional theories of what government might or might not do, provided government did what they wanted. They

[1] *Hist. of U. S.*, by Adams, v. 2, 217.
[2] *Id.*, v. 3, 138. [3] *Id.*, v. 3, 157.

feared no corruption in which they were to have a part. They were in secret jealous of Virginia, and as devoted as George Cabot and Stephen Higginson to the interests of commerce and manufacture. A majority of the Northern Democrats were men of this kind. Their dislike of Federalists was a social, rather than political, feeling, for Federalist manners seemed to them a wilful impertinence, but the Varnums and Crowninshields, of Massachusetts, cared as little as DeWitt Clinton or Aaron Burr for the notions of Speaker Macon and John Randolph."[1]

But prosaic and even sordid in some respects as these Northern Democrats were, for the most part, Jefferson could not conduct the Government, and Madison could not be elected to the Presidency, without them; and it is only just to them to say that their practical training and hum-drum, Philistine outlook supplied in more than one respect a wholesome corrective of the tendency of some of the Southern public men of the time to lay too much stress upon governmental theories and quixotic conceptions of public responsibility. And Jefferson, who, like the true apostle of Democracy that he was, prized a Northern proselyte, if anything, more than a Southern communicant, got along with the Northern Democrats remarkably well. But, from first to last, Randolph and the old Republicans found difficulty in working harmoniously with them. As early as July 18, 1801, Randolph wrote to Nicholson: "We think that the great work is only begun, and that without a *substantial* reform we shall have little reason to congratulate ourselves on the mere change of men."[2] A few months later, he followed up the same idea in a second letter to Nicholson: "There is much want of concert and even of discordance of opinion in the majority. The Eastern gentlemen generally seem content with the change of men, and wish not to pursue it much farther. *We* are for a change of important

[1] *Hist. of U. S.*, v. 2, 205. [2] Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

principles."[1] And, a few days later, in a letter to St. George Tucker, he brought out the division in the party still more clearly:

"Parties here consist of the old Federalists courting popularity—these are a small minority; the same kind of characters, Republicanized, and lukewarm Republicans, who, added to the former, will perhaps constitute a bare majority of the House, and Republicans who hold the same principles now that they professed under adverse fortune, and who, *if they were all here*, might amount to about 50 members. These are determined to pay the *debt* off, to repeal the internal taxes, to retrench every unnecessary expense, military, naval, and civil, to enforce economy as well upon men calling themselves Republicans as upon Federalists, and to punish delinquents without respect to their *political professions*."[2]

With such a broad line of cleavage between the old and the new Republicans as these letters indicate, the leadership of Randolph in the House would, in any event, have been very unstable; but, accompanied as his severe conceptions of public duty and his doctrinaire notions of State sovereignty were by an overbearing will, a pugnacious temper, an impatient and intolerant disposition and a sarcastic tongue, a breach sooner or later, between him and his Northern followers, and, as a further result, between him and Jefferson and Madison and even Gallatin, for whom he entertained a great admiration, was inevitable. In the eyes of the Northern, and especially the New England, Democrats, he was a precisian and a theorist whose scruples and dogmas were constantly interfering with the smooth transaction of the public business, let alone their own private objects, and the dictatorial offspring of social distinctions even sharper than those which usually separated them from the Federalists. Attracted

[1] Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong., Dec. 26, 1801.
[2] Jan. 15, 1802, Lucas MSS.

to the Democratic party in New England by their dislike for clerical bigotry, and their leaning towards a common social and political level, and in the Middle States by the latter simply, they were not accustomed, and did not take kindly, to hectoring habits of manner and speech which they were quick to impute to impetuous and arbitrary characteristics bred by the slave plantation. As time passed they formed a stronger and stronger aversion to Randolph. The result was that finally nothing but some question, in which their selfish interests and fears and Randolph's convictions and passions were deeply enlisted, was needed to develop a positively mutinous spirit on their part; and this question was found in the Yazoo debate of 1805. The only persons responsible for the suggestion or support of the Yazoo compromise, whom Randolph did not denounce in that debate, were Jefferson, Madison, and Gallatin. In one of his speeches in the discussion he even spoke of Jefferson, as we have seen, as a great and good man; and, while expressing unutterable astonishment in the same discussion that Madison and Gallatin should have united in the report, recommending the compromise, he referred also to them as men in whom he had had and still had the highest confidence.[1] But he must have realized and, if he did not, Jefferson, Madison, and Gallatin surely did, that, if it was infamous to vote for the Yazoo compromise, it was equally infamous to recommend it. As to the Democrats, who voted for the compromise in the House, all of them, even those who were not specifically mentioned by Randolph, were, of course, caught up in the scorching whirlwind of his fierce onset. That after the miscarriage of the recommendatory report, if ever before, Jefferson, Madison, or Gallatin could have felt, to say nothing of their personal sensibilities, that Randolph had the temper, the cool judgment, or the capacity for self-surrender or teamwork, that parliamentary leadership requires, is

[1] *A. of C.*, 1804-5, v. 2, 1172.

unimaginable; and that under the consuming lava-stream of his invective any sequacious impulse in regard to him, that had previously existed in the breasts of the Findleys, Smilies, and Varnums, who voted in favor of the compromise, could have survived, is equally so. A man can sometimes drive other men by such language as Randolph used in the Yazoo debates, but by such language he cannot hope to lead them. Randolph may not have been quite correct in saying that the Yazoo question was the source of all the dissensions in the Republican party, because the discord which it engendered was after all but symptomatic of the natural divisions that existed in the bosom of the party. Nor temperamentally unfit as he was for either accepting the leadership of anyone else, or of patiently and tactfully exercising the functions of leadership himself, can the view be hazarded that but for the Yazoo business he would not have been unhorsed. In some other manner, his saddle was certain to be emptied in the end, but there can be no doubt that his leadership was doomed from the time that he delivered his brilliant but intemperate speeches in the Yazoo debate of 1805, and that its loss was simply accelerated by his disappointments over the Chase trial and the English Mission; and the additional enmities that he created among the Northern Democrats in the House by his speech on Gregg's Resolution. It can hardly be denied, as George Tucker has stated, that Randolph was better qualified to be the leader of an opposition than of a dominant party, and that, when the Democratic leader of the House, he was more an object of fear than of affection to many of his fellow-Democrats.[1] But it is equally undeniable that, despite the disqualifications that rendered permanent leadership for him a "starry hope that *did* arise but to be overcast," his leadership, while it lasted, was, though reluctantly recognized by many Democratic members of the house, an extraordinarily masterly and shining

[1] *Jefferson*, by Tucker, v. 2, 207.

one. Upon this point we have the testimony of a no less competent witness than Jefferson himself. In a letter to Monroe, he wrote as follows:

"In a House of Representatives, of a great mass of good sense, Mr. Randolph's popular eloquence gave him such advantages as to place him unrivalled as the leader of the House; and, although not conciliatory to those whom he led, principles of duty and patriotism induced many of them to swallow humiliations he subjected them to, and to vote as was right as long as he kept the path of right himself. The sudden defection of such a man could not but produce a momentary astonishment and even dismay; but for a moment only. The good sense of the House rallied around its principles, and without any leader, pursued steadily the business of the session, did it well, and, by a strength of vote, which has never before been seen. Upon all trying questions, exclusive of the Federalists, the minority of Republicans voting with him has been from four to six or eight against from ninety to one hundred."[1] (*a*)

And with this letter should be read the moral, so applicable to almost every man in American public life, who has ever tried to free his limbs from the chafings of the party breeching, which Jefferson at a later day drew from the early career of Randolph. Writing to Col. Wm. Duane from Monticello, he said: "The example of John Randolph is a caution to all honest and prudent men to sacrifice a little of self-confidence and to go with their friends, although they may sometimes think they are going wrong."[2]

The height from which Randolph is supposed to have fallen, when he did fall, may be measured by what Gallatin said of him many years afterwards, in a private letter. Enumerating the candidates for public honors, who were regarded with favor by Jefferson, Madison, and himself, he wrote:

[1] May 4, 1806, *Writings*, v. 11, 106.
[2] April 30, 1811, *Writings* (Ford. Ed.), v. 9, 316 (note).

"During the 12 years I was at the Treasury, I was anxiously looking for some man that could fill my place there and in the general direction of the national concerns; for one indeed that could replace Mr. Jefferson, Mr. Madison, and myself. Breckenridge, of Kentucky, only appeared and died; the eccentricities and temper of J. Randolph soon destroyed his influence."[1]

Assuming that the Yazoo scandal was the real beginning of the feud between Randolph and the Jefferson administration, it seems to us that his revolt cannot reasonably be visited with censure. That in the Yazoo discussion of 1805 he used language which exceeded the just limits of parliamentary self-restraint may be admitted, but it should not be forgotten that the colossal fraud which he pilloried far exceeded the bounds of ordinary turpitude. Incensed as he was by the knowledge of the transaction which he had derived at first hand from his visit to Georgia at a time when it was of recent occurrence, and was being spewed out of the mouth of the people of Georgia, in a frenzy of wrathful disgust, he could better say than most members of Congress, as he did say in the Yazoo discussion: "For this is one of the cases, which once being engaged in, I can never desert or relinquish till I shall have exercised every energy of mind and faculty of body I possess in refuting so nefarious a project."[2] That the conduct of Randolph in the Yazoo debates was also very different from the cautious and sober deportment to which a parliamentary leader must adhere or else forfeit his leadership, may likewise be admitted. But why, when the voice of individual duty is distinctly heard, should not parliamentary leadership, as well as pecuniary ease, popularity, or even life itself be foregone? Whatever may be said about the heat or the imprudence of Randolph in the Yazoo discussion, it is impossible to question his disinter-

[1] *J. R.*, by Adams, 55.
[2] *A. of C.*, 1803–5, v. 1, 1104.

estedness. "He and his friends," Henry Adams admits in his essay on John Randolph, "were remarkably free from the meaner ambitions of political life; they neither begged patronage, nor asked for any money, nor did they tolerate jobbery in any form."[1] And the same writer also admits that this group of Southern Republicans was conspicuously free from servility to party or executive influence.[2] From the point of view of his purely selfish interests, Randolph had nothing to gain and everything to lose by going at the Yazoo compromise with beak and claw as he did. He had been on terms of great friendship and intimacy, to use his own terms, with Jefferson and Gallatin. Down to that time he had, so far as we are aware, cherished no animosity towards Madison. Scathing as his Yazoo speeches were, they were yet not lacking in a prudent desire on his part to remain in amity with these three powerful individuals, who held the keys to his political future. If any personal motive entered into his onslaught upon the Yazoo compromise, it must have been supplied by a deliberate preference on his part for the moral authority and prestige of a popular tribune, or redresser of public wrongs, rather than for high place in the more material sense. If so, this preference is too close to "the last infirmity of noble minds" to be set down to any ignoble origin. Nor can we see, as has been claimed, that Randolph was, to any measurable extent, deflected by his hostility to the Jefferson administration from the political creed which he had always avowed. It is true that, in a bantering letter to Gallatin, he had said with respect to a possible clash between the United States and France: "After all the vaporing I have no expectation of a serious war. *Tant pis pour nous!*"[3] And it is also true that he is reported as using this language on Dec. 6, 1804, when our peaceful

[1] *J. R.*, 192.
[2] *Id.*, 53.
[3] June 4, 1803, *J. R.*, by Adams, 84.

relations with Great Britain had become endangered by British outrages on our coasts:

"He would like to see the armed vessels employed in disturbing our peaceable commerce blown out of the water. He wished to see our American officers and seamen lying yardarm and yardarm in the attack, and the question of peace or war staked on the issue, if the conduct of such marauders were justified by the government of the nation to which they belong."[1]

And these utterances have been cited in confirmation of the idea that Randolph was moved merely by pique and personal resentment in standing out against a war with Great Britain, as he did in his speeches on Gregg's Resolution. But it is obvious that the utterances which we have quoted were simply passing ebullitions of the moment; such as often bubble up in the human mind and subside with the reflux of reflection and habitual convictions. If there was one thing to which, before his speeches on Gregg's resolution, Randolph was more positively committed as an original Republican than to another, it was hostility to large military and naval armaments and to wars of any but a purely defensive nature; and to this position he remained faithful throughout the whole of his life. And it should be remembered, too, that Jefferson himself was as inimical to Gregg's Resolution as Randolph because of its tendency to bring on war. In a similar manner, it has been charged that Randolph's attitude towards the Florida purchase was also shaped by the same enmity to the Jefferson administration, and was inconsistent with the relations which he sustained as the leader of the House to the Louisiana purchase, when a secret message and a request for money, to be placed at the disposal of Jefferson, had come down to him from Jefferson in that case too. "But we never heard this," sneered

[1] *A. of C.*, 1804–5, v. 2, 769.

Jefferson himself in a letter to Bidwell, "while the declaimer was himself a backstairs man."[1] But, at the time of the Louisiana purchase, Jefferson was not asking the House for money with which to bribe Spain to bully France out of Louisiana, or shirking any responsibility that properly rested upon the Executive. It may be conceded that, if Randolph had been a more politic and less fastidious man, he might have united with Jefferson and Madison in bribing France to bully Spain out of her property, as Randolph expressed it, and might still have contrived, as they have done, to stand well with the Muse of History. Spain at the time was a mere puppet of France, as Randolph himself recognized, when he said on the floor of the House that there were no longer any Pyrenees.[2] But, while the points that Randolph made on Jefferson's message relative to the Florida Purchase were in some respects a little technical and overstrained, they were fundamentally sound, and were true to a nature that was, in more than one regard, more highly and admirably organized than that of either Jefferson or Madison. The vacillation which Jefferson had exhibited in the foreign relations of the United States, laying down the sword at one time to take up the olive branch, and laying down the olive branch at another to take up the sword; allowing the functions of his cabinet and himself to be exercised occasionally by more or less irresponsible spokesmen on the floor of Congress, and studiously endeavoring in the matter of the Florida Purchase, to abdicate his own executive initiative and secretly to shift the responsibility of his office, in a case equivocal at best, to the shoulders of Congress, was well calculated to disgust such a high-spirited man as Randolph, and sufficient to furnish such a man with a fully adequate motive for the course which was set forth in the letters of "Decius."

[1] July 5, 1806, *Writings*, Mem. Ed., v. 11, 116.
[2] *A. of C.*, 1805–7, v. 1, 564.

It is supposed by Henry Adams that the effort of Randolph, at the first session of the 9th Congress, to secure the repeal of the salt duty was inspired by a desire to embarrass the administration[1]; but shortly afterwards the repeal of this duty was recommended by Jefferson himself.[2] It has also been charged that Randolph was guilty of inconsistency in supporting the Louisiana purchase at all, as it tended, in more than one way, to curtail the power of State sovereignty, of which he was such a jealous guardian. But what might be the ultimate tendencies of the purchase in that respect, neither Randolph nor any other statesman could at that time very clearly see. Certainly no transaction in our history is enveloped with the dust of so many shattered prophecies. Nor should it be forgotten that Randolph did not share the view of Jefferson that the purchase of Louisiana was an unconstitutional act; on the contrary, he contended on the floor of Congress that it was a constitutional one.[3] The Republican creed, it has been happily said, was the Federalist creed spelled backwards,[4] and, after spelling it backwards to a certain extent, as in the repeal of the Internal Taxes, the reduction of the Army and Navy, and the like, Jefferson and the new Republicans under the influence of the love of power begotten by power, and the over-riding necessities which render governmental responsibility and minority opposition two such very dissimilar things, began to spell the Federalist creed forward again, and did not cease until they had done almost everything that Jefferson and his original Republican adherents had condemned the Federalists for doing—not indeed until Randolph could wrathfully say that Jefferson had not differed more from his predecessor than he had from himself. But, in our judgment, they are right who see in the political career of Randolph, from beginning to

[1] *J. R.*, 185.
[2] *A. of C.*, 1806–7, v. 2, 14.
[3] *Id.*, 1803–5, v. 1, 434.
[4] *J. R.*, by Henry Adams, 57.

end, a thread of continuous consistency which cannot be said to have been really broken even during the period when it was subject to the strain of the quarrel between him and the Jefferson administration. No! If Randolph is to be chided, it is not for clinging to the principles which brought the Republicans into power, but for not deserting these principles with Jefferson and Madison when those statesmen found them too cramping and straightlaced for the expanding growth and imperial destiny of our country. Randolph forsook the Republican party and its leader, but he never forsook its original principles. In fact, it can with much more truth be affirmed that Jefferson abandoned him than that he abandoned Jefferson. And it may be said in his vindication, too, that, when his former party associates turned their backs upon him, he did not go over to the opposite party as Jefferson predicted that he would do[1] and, as the renegade or turncoat is so apt to do, mouth professions of allegiance to everything for which he had previously expressed abhorrence, but, though encompassed on every side by the sleepless machinations of former friends, bent upon his political destruction, continued, all but invulnerable in his own splendid talents and in the admiration and affection of his constituents, to uphold the convictions with which he had faced Patrick Henry on the Court-Green at Charlotte Court House. (*a*)

We might add that an informal, as well as a formal, explanation was given by Randolph (with mock gravity) of his rupture with Jefferson. It had its origin, he sometimes said, in the fact that, on one occasion, he had beaten Jefferson badly at a game of chess.[2] In speaking of Randolph and his fellow schismatics, Jefferson was not always as moderate as he was in his letters to Monroe. In a letter

[1] To Monroe, May 4, 1806, *Writings*, Mem. Ed., v. 11, 107.

[2] *Famous Americans*, by Parton, 200; and MSS. *Recollections of Rev. Jno. S. Kirkpatrick.*

to Wilson Cary Nicholas, he termed them "all tongue."[1] But, when he used this term, he must have forgotten for the moment that among the tongues that excited his derision was one which gave no little point to the Turkish proverb that the tongue has no bones but breaks bones. It was impossible for many reasons for Randolph to form quite as intense an antipathy to Jefferson as to Madison. But, from the year 1806 until the last years of his life, he rarely allowed an opportunity to decry or ridicule Jefferson to escape him. In his Diary, his malice assumed the form of cryptic memoranda based on contemporary gossip in regard to Jefferson's private life; in his public utterances either the form of jeremiads over the degradations inflicted on the institutions and manners of Virginia by Jefferson's levelling propensities or that of sarcastic references to what Randolph conceived to be his speculative and visionary futilities. The Virginia law of descents which was drafted by Jefferson, and which abolished primogeniture and entails, drew from him the exclamation to which the fact that Jefferson had none but daughters gave its main meaning: "Well might old George Mason exclaim that the authors of that law never had a son!"[2] In a letter to one of his friends, written in the last years of his life, he descanted in this lugubrious fashion on the future of the Old Virginia aristocracy:

"The old families of Virginia will form connections with low people and sink into the mass of overseers' sons and daughters. And this is the legitimate, nay inevitable, conclusion, to which Mr. Jefferson and his levelling system has brought us. They know better in New York, and they feel the good effects of not disturbing the rights of property. The patroon is as secure in his rents as any man in the community. The great manor of Philipsburg was scandalously confiscated, and the Livingstones have lost their influence by sub-division. Every now

[1] *Jefferson*, by Tucker, v. 2, 243.
[2] Garland, v. 1, 19.

and then our old acquaintance, Burr, finds out some flaw in the titles of the usurpers, and a fine estate is restored to its legitimate owners."[1]

One mode in which Randolph expressed his antagonism to Madison, as a candidate for the Presidency, was to say that he did not wish another philosopher to be President.[2] In the course of a speech, which he delivered in the House in 1817, he declared that he had rather that Jefferson should keep on Monticello, play with his wind-mills and make mouse-traps than meddle with the Constitution of Virginia which he had tried to amend.[3] The year before he died, the pilgrimages which were frequently made to Monticello, brought forth from him, sunk as he was at that time in misanthropy, these scornful words:

"I cannot live in this miserable undone country where as the Turks follow their sacred standard, which is a pair of Mahomet's green breeches, we are governed by the old red breeches of that Prince of Projectors, St. Thomas of *Canting*bury; and surely Becket himself never had more pilgrims at his shrine than the saint of Monticello."[4]

In a less morbid vein, were the satirical remarks which he had made previously in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1829–30 on one of Jefferson's inventions:

"We are not to be struck down by the authority of Mr. Jefferson. Sir, if there be any point in which the authority of Mr. Jefferson might be considered as valid, it is in the mechanism of a plough. He once mathematically and geometrically demonstrated the form of a mould-board which should present the least resistance; his mould-board was sent to Paris to the *savants*—it was exhibited to all the visitors at

[1] Garland, v. 1, 19.

[2] *Life of J. Melbourn*, by Hammond, 92.

[3] James E. Jewett to Gen. Dearborn, Feb. 5,1817; *William and Mary Quarterly*, v. 17, 140.

[4] Garland, v. 2, 346.

the Garden of Plants. The *savants* all declared *una voce* that this was the best mould-board that had ever been devised. They did not decree to Mr. Jefferson the honors of Hermes Trismegistus but they cast his mould-board in plaster; and there it remains an eternal proof that this form of mould-board presents less resistance than any other on the face of the earth. Sometime afterwards an adversary brought into Virginia the Carey plough, but it was such an awkward, ill-looking thing that it would not sell. At length, some one tried it, and, though its mould-board was not that of least resistance, it beat Mr. Jefferson's plough as much as common sense will always beat theories and reveries."[1]

An effect of the speeches delivered by Randolph on Gregg's resolution and other foreign topics, before the end of the first session of the 9th Congress, was to make his name widely known throughout Great Britain (*a*). One of these speeches was printed in New York, and reprinted in London with observations by James Stephen, the author of the celebrated production, *War in Disguise* (*b*), and was circulated generally in Great Britain. It was reviewed besides by Henry Brougham in *The Edinburgh Review*. "The speech of Mr. Randolph," said Brougham, "is certainly the production of a vigorous mind. It abounds in plain and striking statements, mixed with imagery by no means destitute of merit, though directed by an exceedingly coarse and vulgar taste."[2] This was high praise to be accorded by an Englishman of that time to anything American, and, if Randolph did not escape the reproach of coarseness and vulgarity at the hands of the reviewer, that was but the usual fate then of the American Yahoo, at the hands, or rather hoofs, of the English Houyhnhnhm. The sensibilities of the reviewer would perhaps have been still more painfully shocked, could he have foreseen that

[1] *Debates*, 533.
[2] Oct., 1807, p. 2.

Randolph would be so little flattered by the condescension shown him by the English author of *War in Disguise* as to term James Stephen in his Diary "A furious bigot."

CHAPTER VII

Congressional Career Continued. In Opposition

During the recess of the Ninth Congress, Randolph remained so agitated by the tempestuous scenes through which he had passed, that he wrote to Nicholson from Bizarre that he longed for its second session so that he might again face "the monster of detraction."[1] A month later, in another letter to the same correspondent, he said that persons were not wanting outside of his district who were very willing to lend a helping hand to pull him down, and that he had been told that one of them—William B. Giles—had been very violent, and had even descended to unworthy means, of which he had deemed him incapable.[2] For this conduct, Giles had to drain a bitter cup of atonement. And, in the same letter, Randolph mentions the fact that Granger had been inquiring whether Creed Taylor—the lawyer who had launched Randolph upon his first candidacy for Congress—could not be brought forward to oppose him.

When Congress reconvened on Dec. 1, 1806, Randolph did not appear until some twenty minutes after the House had decided to adhere to its usual practice of filling the places on the Committee of Ways and Means by the appointment of the Speaker. Its hesitation was due to an effort to bring about the election of the members of the Committee by ballot, which was prompted by the desire

[1] June 3, 1806, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.
[2] *Id.*, July 7, 1806.

of some of Randolph's enemies to exclude him from it.[1] Under the circumstances, Macon's nice scruples would not permit him to appoint Randolph to it—a result so distressing to the feelings of Macon, who ardently admired and loved Randolph, that he wrote to Nicholson the next day that in consequence of it he had spent a sleepless night.[2] There were two men on the Committee, however, Joseph Clay, of Pennsylvania, and James M. Garnett, of Virginia, who admired and loved Randolph as much, perhaps, as Macon did; and, by their unselfish spirit of self-sacrifice, Randolph was restored to the Chairmanship of the Committee a few days after his exclusion from it. First, by an order of the House, Garnett was excused from serving on it and Randolph appointed in his place[3]; and, a few days later, Clay, whose name came first on the Committee, as originally appointed, arose and announced that, under an existing rule of the House, the member first named on Committees was Chairman unless another member was chosen by the Committee, and that he was instructed to say, that, pursuant to this rule, the Committee of Ways and Means had appointed John Randolph its Chairman.[4]

Generally speaking, the proceedings during the second session of the Ninth Congress were such as signally to vindicate, in many respects, the course of Randolph and his friends during its first session. "The doings here," Macon wrote to Nicholson, "will hereby convince every candid man in the world that the Republicans of the *Old School* were not wrong last winter. Give truth fair play and it will prevail."[5] To begin with, there was no response in the President's Annual Message to the war-drum that Crowninshield and the other members of his group had beat so loudly at the last session.

[1] *A. of C.*, 1806–7, v. 2, 110.
[2] Dec. 2, 1806, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.
[3] *A. of C.*, 1805–7, v. 2, 115. [4] *Id.*, 130.
[5] Dec. 26, 1806, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

"The message of the 3rd," Randolph wrote to Nicholson, "was, as you supposed, wormwood to certain gentry. They made wry faces, but, in fear of the rod, and in hopes of sugar plums, swallowed it with less apparent repugnance than I had predicted. They remind me of a practice which I have heard of in military punishments to give the offender a bullet to chew on to enable him to bear the pain and keep him from crying out. They chewed the bullet with a vengeance."[1]

And, after the Annual Message had been read, recantations of conclusions, reached by the Jeffersonian majority in the House at the last session, followed each other so rapidly that more than one of Jefferson's stoutest champions might well have asked what all the pother had been about. One bill, which received the assent of the House, provided for the suspension, in the discretion of the President, of the Non-Importation Act passed at the last session,[2] and another abolished the duty on salt.[3] And there were still other penitential measures to afford Randolph the opportunity, of which he was quick to avail himself, to remind his former adversaries how senseless had been the cry of "mad dog" which they had raised against him at the last session.[4] If he had been less disposed to chew the cud of past resentments, and had been a little more conciliatory and judicious in word and manner, it hardly admits of doubt that he could have reacquired his former position of recognized leadership in spite of the smouldering animosity with which members of the House, like Sloan and Jackson, regarded him, and that there would have been more rejoicing in administration circles over the one lamb that had been lost and afterwards found than over the ninety and nine that had not gone astray. All that was asked of him was that he should pay some moderate regard to the ordinary rules of party discipline, keep his

[1] Dec. 10, 1806, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.
[2] *A. of C.*, 1805–7, v. 2, 158.
[3] *Id.*, 319. [4] *Id.*, 350.

squeamish scruples within reasonable bounds, and support James Madison for the Presidential successorship. To no one was this more apparent than to Randolph himself.

"Of all the men," he said to Nicholson in the letter from which we have just quoted, "who have met me with the greatest apparent cordiality old Smilie is the last whom you would suspect. I understand that they (you understand who *they* are) are well disposed towards a truce. The higher powers are in the same goodly temper, as I am informed."

Notwithstanding the bold suggestion made by Jefferson in his annual message that Federal surpluses should be applied to the great purposes of the public education, roads, rivers, canals and such other objects of public importance as it might be thought proper to add to the constitutional enumeration of Federal powers, including the establishment of a national university, it looked for a time as if Randolph might yet realize his dream of a commonwealth founded on the old unsophisticated Republican principles. More than once the desire to placate him seemed to be stronger even than the wishes of the President. Marked tenderness was shown to his views about the army and navy; he decisively defeated the effort to suspend the writ of habeas corpus in the case of Burr's accomplices, Bollman and Swartwout,[1] and a majority of the House united with him in cutting down appropriations and refusing to fortify New York. The attitude of the majority towards this last proposition would be too fatuous for belief if it were not rendered more intelligible by the pacifist simpletons and knaves who did so much to enervate our national energies on the eve of the recent World War. "When the enemy comes, let them take our towns, and let us retire into the country," was the suggestion of Mr. Nelson, of Maryland.[2] The fact that our commercial towns were defenceless was supposed by Mr.

[1] *A. of C.*, 1806–7, v. 2, 424. [2] *Id.*, 389.

Holland, of North Carolina, to be our only safety[1]; and, bearing in mind one of the perverted trains of reasoning pursued by the latter day pacifists, of whom we have just spoken, the atavism of most human ideas comes home to us afresh when we read that Mr. Eppes, of Virginia, the President's son-in-law, declared that the principle laid down by a preceding speaker [Mr. Mumford, of New York] that, to preserve peace, we ought to be prepared for war, was the very principle which was the source of all the miseries of Europe.[2] John Randolph, himself, contended that, no matter how well fortified New York might be, an invading army could land above the City, and cut off its intercourse with the country, and that fortifications at New York, therefore, would simply be a gracious gift to the enemy. It is not surprising that puerilities like these should have been set down by members of the House from the New England and the Middle States either to the lack of a sober, practical training or to a narrow, sectional bias. And Randolph's capacity for effective ridicule was never turned to a worse purpose than when he imparted additional irritation to the feelings of these members by declaring that he suspected that the only effectual plan for defending New York was that proposed on a former day by Mr. Elmer of New York; that is to say, to stop up the channel leading to its harbor. This, Randolph said, would undoubtedly be an adequate defense, and the learned gentleman who suggested it must, he added, be a disciple of the learned Dr. Last who had an infallible recipe for curing corns on the human toes; namely, cutting the toes off.[3]

But all efforts to lure and impound the estray proved entirely unsuccessful. Throughout the second session of the Ninth Congress, Randolph, though he frequently participated in its debates, continued to sustain a relation of complete aloofness to Jefferson. He once declared that he

[1] *A. of C.*, 1806–7, v. 2, 598. [2] *Id.*, 489. [3] *Id.*, 610.

was sprung from a race who were known never to forsake a friend or to forgive a foe.[1] In the language of his reply to Smilie, during the debate over Burr's conspiracy at this session, at the preceding session he had had the finger of scorn pointed at him and the cry of "mad dog" and "political defection" raised against him[2]; and he was as slow as King Powhatan himself was, under similar, though less artificial, conditions, to exchange the tomahawk for the calumet. Several times, during the second session of the Ninth Congress, he said things sufficiently rasping to bring the red hue of anger again to the faces of Smilie, Sloan and Jackson. In one of the discussions over the duty on salt, he mentioned that the House Bill repealing it was passed on the recommendation of the President, but recollecting himself, he instantly added: "Not that that consideration had any influence on my vote."[3] Wounds received by him never, and wounds inflicted by him, seldom, fully healed, and it is impossible too to go over the debates during the second session of the Ninth Congress without having the impression corroborated that, quite apart from his retaliatory spirit, Randolph, except when he was rallying a downcast opposition, was constitutionally unfitted for any leadership in a parliamentary sense other than the kind which is taken but not given; and that kind of leadership is always highly precarious. "Leave the President alone," was the advice to him of his friend, Joseph Bryan, shortly after the close of the first session of the Ninth Congress,[4] and this was the wise counsel that the same friend gave him just before Congress reconvened in the succeeding December.

"Before you receive this, you will have commenced another career in Congress, and I greatly wish you to remember what I have often told you that with a little complaisance you may

[1] Garland, v. 2, 248.
[2] *A. of C.*, 1805–7, v. 2, 350.
[3] *Id.*, 642.
[4] June 24, 1806, Bryan MSS.

do anything. Many men will lead (to use a homely saying) that won't drive. Affronting one or two miscreants matters little, but remember that four mastiffs are a match for a lion, and even Hercules would easily be vanquished by a mob."[1]

If Randolph had been capable of taking this advice, he might in time have regained his lost ground. But to leave the President alone and to exhibit a little complaisance were the very things that he was incapable of doing. He could not even leave the Senate alone, for, in the course of the debates over the duty on salt, he resented some changes made by it in the House Bill repealing this duty in these sarcastic terms; after ignoring entirely Macon's effort to halt him when he had first uttered the words, "Their High Mightinesses, the Senate":

"Elevated above us by a tenure of six years in office and by being few in number, they are sullenly or pettishly to reject our bills, and, then, you are to coax them into a change of opinion, that, by a stern and aristocratical pride, they may saddle the nation not only with the Mediterranean Fund but likewise with the salt tax."[2] (*a*)

Randolph was too proud, too aspiring, too conscious of intellectual power himself readily to give the pledge of fealty a second time to even such an amiable master as Jefferson, and complaisance was something that he was entirely too stiffly sincere to manifest when he did not really feel it.

Besides, it is but fair to him to remember, in this connection, too, that he was wholly out of touch with the influences, partly selfish and partly fatalistic, which were gradually transforming the Old Republicanism first into Federalism and then into something still more advanced; that his chief aims were to protect the reserved rights of

[1] Nov. 28, 1806, Bryan MSS.
[2] *A. of C.*, 1805–7, v. 2, 642.

the States by a strict construction of the Federal Constitution, to rebuke every unwarranted exercise of Executive authority, and to make the Federal Government the simple, frugal and honest agency for the promotion of the popular welfare and happiness, which the Republican party before its accession to power had contended that it should be; and that there was no more reason why Madison, with his recommendation of the Yazoo compromise, his early Federalist leanings and his lack of virile, stirring force should be more agreeable to him as a candidate for the Presidency in 1807 than he had been in 1806. And it will soon be seen also that, for some time, Randolph, who, in 1805, at any rate, it is safe to say, had more political influence in Virginia than any other Virginian except Jefferson—Madison and Monroe not excepted—had assumed the character of a political manager, and was planning, with the aid of such uncorrupted Republicans as John Taylor of Caroline, and Littleton Waller Tazewell, to elect Monroe to the Presidency, and to bring the Federal Government back to the contracted orbit from which it had wandered. The most important discussion, developed by the second session of the Ninth Congress, was over the bill to prohibit the importation of slaves into the United States after Dec. 31, 1807. It is highly interesting because it demonstrated not only how increasingly intolerant of slavery the Free States, and especially Pennsylvania, with its Quaker leaven, were becoming, but how little comparatively the slave-owners of the South Atlantic States shared the generous impulses in favor of emancipation which had colored public opinion in Virginia so deeply immediately after the Revolution, and was again to do so still more deeply in 1831.

"A large majority of the people in the Southern States," said Early of Georgia, "do not consider Slavery as a crime. They do not believe it immoral to hold human flesh in bondage.

Many deprecate slavery as an evil, as a political evil, but not as a crime. Reflecting men apprehend at some future day evils, incalculable evils, from it, but it is a fact, that few, very few, consider it as a crime. . . . A large majority of people in the Southern States do not consider slavery as even an evil."[1]

Whether a crime or not, the idea that slavery was not an evil was one to which it was impossible for Randolph to subscribe; and, while the debate on the main question involved in the bill was pending, he preserved a notable reticence; but when a bill relating to the same subject came down from the Senate, with a provision in it prohibiting the coastwise domestic slave-trade in vessels of less burden than forty tons, he, who was for so many years, where Southern rights under the Federal Constitution were menaced, to be "the lonely warder on the hill," attacked it with all his wonted force as an infraction of private rights of property.

"He feared," he is reported as saying, "lest at a future period it [the provision in question] might be made the pretext of universal emancipation. He had rather lose the bill, he had rather lose all the bills of the session, he had rather lose every bill passed since the establishment of the Government than agree to the provision contained in this slave bill."

He further declared prophetically that, if ever the time of disunion between the States should arise, the line of severance would be between the slaveholding and the non-slaveholding states.[2] And almost as significant were the words which he used a little later in the same debate:

"He," the report says, "observed that, when the freemen of the Southern States should depend for assistance on the Northern against their slaves, he should despair. All he asked was that they should remain neutral; that they would not erect themselves into an abolition society."[3] (*a*)

[1] *A. of C.*, 1805–7, v. 2, 238. [2] *Id.*, 626. [3] *Ibid.*

After the adjournment of the second session of the Ninth Congress in March, 1807, Randolph was appointed by Chief Justice Marshall the foreman of the grand jury that indicted Aaron Burr for treason. It was not formed until Burr had successfully objected to changes which had been made by the marshal in the original panel after he had summoned the twenty-four freeholders required by law to constitute it.[1] His next step was to challenge some of the remaining grand jurors "for favor"; that is to say, for prejudice or an unfriendly bias against him. One of his challenges was to Senator William Branch Giles,[2] because merely upon the strength of the documents, which had accompanied Jefferson's special message to Congress in regard to Burr's conspiracy, Giles had favored the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus. Burr knew also, of course, that Jefferson was the master spirit behind the prosecution, and that Giles was on terms of close intimacy with him. Giles promptly admitted the truth of Burr's statements, and offered to withdraw, and was allowed to do so, though denying that he cherished any personal resentment against the accused; and claiming that he could do justice as a grand juror. Burr, in turn, took particular pains to disavow any animosity towards Giles; not forgetting doubtless that, after the death of Hamilton, Giles had drawn a petition to the Governor of New Jersey, praying the discontinuance of the prosecution against Burr for murder, and had induced nearly all the Republican members of the Senate to sign it.[3] Burr also challenged Wilson Cary Nicholas, and, when asked by him on what grounds, replied because Nicholas was his bitter personal enemy.[4] The exception was well taken. Nicholas was, if anything, more intimate with Jefferson than Giles; had been a member of the House of Representatives, when the

[1] *Burr Trials*, v. 1, 31–32, 37, 38. [2] *Id.*, 38–39.
[3] *Memoirs of J. Q. Adams*, v. 1, 317.
[4] *Burr Trials*, v. 1, 41–42.

Federalist plot to make Burr President was hatched; had done everything in his power to bring about the election of Clinton instead of Burr to the Vice-Presidency; and now admitted that his suspicions had been strongly excited by Burr's western journey.[1] Joseph Eggleston, another juror, asked to be excused because he had declared his belief in Burr's guilt, but admitted, when questioned by Chief Justice Marshall, that he could do justice in the case. Burr declared that he would leave the question entirely to the Chief Justice. "The industry which has been used through this country (Virginia) to prejudice my cause," he said, "leaves me very little chance indeed of an impartial jury."[2] When Randolph was appointed foreman, he quickly asked to be excused because of his "strong prepossession." "Really," commented Burr, "I am afraid we shall not be able to find any man without this prepossession." But Marshall announced that a man must not only have formed but declared an opinion to be excused from serving on the jury; and Randolph was duly sworn as foreman.[3] Burr probably thought that Randolph's "strong prepossession" against him would be more than counterbalanced by his strong prepossession against Jefferson. So far as we are aware no grand jury composed of so many conspicuous citizens has ever been organized in the United States (*a*). Its personnel was as follows: John Randolph, Jr., Joseph Eggleston, Joseph C. Cabell, Littleton Waller Tazewell, Robert Barraud Taylor, James Pleasants, John Brockenbrough, William Daniel, James M. Garnett, John Mercer, Edward Pegram, Munford Beverly, John Ambler, Thomas Harrison, Alexander Shephard and James Barbour. It is a striking proof of the high standing, which Randolph enjoyed in Virginia at this time, that he should have been selected as the foreman of such a grand jury by the Chief Justice, whose rigid impartiality throughout the trial was so blamelessly main-

[1] *Burr Trials*, v. 1, 41–42. [2] *Id.*, 44. [3] *Id.*, 44–46.

tained that both prosecution and defense were at one time or another disgruntled with him. If personal considerations entered into the matter, the act of Marshall was natural enough, for he had already had good reason to realize the high esteem in which his powerful intellect and personal virtues were held by Randolph. All things considered, Randolph was as favorably situated as any man in Virginia at that time of equal prominence could well be to do Burr justice. On the one hand, his relations with Jefferson were strained, and, on the other hand, he had, as he had admitted, a "strong prepossession" as to Burr's guilt. While never a rabid anti-Burrite, his general views about Burr had long been such as to make his mind a congenial host for this prepossession. In his letter to Nicholson of Jan. 1, 1801, as the reader has already learned, he said that his own decided preference of Jefferson was in no wise a want of esteem for his colleague; but, from this time on, his occasional comments on Burr were of a very different character. Some three years later, he wrote to Littleton Waller Tazewell that Burr's general reputation for address, ingenuity, eloquence, enterprise and firmness, together with the *éclat*, which he had acquired in the New York election of 1800, had inspired him with a high esteem for his political character; but that a closer inspection (as was too often the case) had diminished, and finally extinguished his confidence in him; and that he now considered him as committed to the Federal party.[1] In the same year, the tragic death of Hamilton at the hands of Burr drew out from Randolph, in a letter to Nicholson, these most graphic observations:

"I feel for Hamilton's *immediate connections* real concern; for himself *nothing;* for his party and those '*soi disant*' Republicans who have been shedding crocodile tears over him, contempt. The first are justly punished for descending to use Burr as a

[1] Apr. 21, 1804, L. W. Tazewell MSS.

tool to divide their opponents; the last are hypocrites who deify Hamilton merely that they may offer up their enemy on his altar. If Burr had not fallen like Lucifer 'never to rise again,' the unprincipled persecution of Cheetham might do him service. By the way, I wonder if Denny adverted to Cheetham's patronage of General Hamilton's memory when he said that 'except the imported *scoundrel* etc.' all bewailed his loss. As it is, those publications are calculated to engage for him the pity even of those who must deny their esteem. The people, who *ultimately* never fail to make a proper decision, abhor persecution, and, whilst they justly refuse their confidence to Mr. B., they will detest his oppressors. They cannot, they *will not* grope in the vile mire of seaport politics not less vitiated than their atmosphere. Burr's is indeed an incomparable defeat; he is cut off from hope of a retreat among the Federalists; not so much because he has overthrown their idol as because he cannot answer their purpose. If his influence were sufficient to *divide us*, Otis and Morris would tomorrow 'even ere those shoes were old in which they followed Hamilton to the grave' go to the hustings and vote for Burr; and, if his character had no other stain upon it than the blood of Hamilton, he should have mine for any secondary office. I admire his letters, particularly that signed by Van Ness, and think his whole conduct *in that affair* does him honor. How much it is to be regretted that so nice a perception of right and wrong, so delicate a sense of propriety as he there exhibited, should have had such little influence on his general conduct! In his correspondence with Hamilton, how visible is his ascendancy over him, and how sensible does the latter appear of it! There is an apparent consciousness of some inferiority to his enemy displayed by Hamilton throughout that transaction, and, from a previous sight of their letters, I could have inferred the issue of the contest. On one side, there is labored obscurity, much equivocation, and many attempts at evasion, not unmixed with a little blustering; on the other an unshaken adherence to his object, and an undeviating pursuit of it not to be eluded or baffled. It reminded me of a sinking fox, pressed by a vigorous old hound, where no shift is permitted to avail him. But, perhaps, you think me inclined to do Burr more

than justice. I assure you, however, that, when I first saw the correspondence, and before my feelings were at all excited for the man, as they have been in some degree by the savage yell which has been raised against him, I applauded the spirit, and admired the style, of his compositions. They are the first proof which I ever saw of his ability."[1]

Once in a letter to Nicholson,[2] and once in a letter to Monroe,[3] Randolph, who dearly loved a scandalous *on dit*, mentions the gossip which found in Hamilton's aversion to Burr another case for the application of the police injunction, *Cherchez la femme!* In later letters than any of these, Randolph refers to the rumors which had reached the east from time to time about Burr's mysterious movements in the western country.[4] Some gentlemen from that quarter, Randolph wrote to Monroe, treated the alleged conspiracy as a matter of ridicule, but, from a variety of circumstances, "*above all, from the known character of the man,*" there was too much reason, Randolph thought, to believe it to be real and serious. A later letter from Randolph to Monroe discloses the belief on Randolph's part that Burr was endeavoring to detach the western country from the Union, with the aid of Spanish money, and also his suspicion that Burr might have made overtures to Great Britain too.[5] Within less than three months after the date of this letter, Cataline, to use the name so often reproachfully applied to Burr, was on his way under guard to Richmond, the capital of the State, which he detested so cordially, where his misfortunes were to excite a measure of generous compassion that has rarely been lavished upon a less deserving object. Writing to Nicholson from Bizarre, Randolph said:

[1] Aug. 27, 1804, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

[2] Apr. 21, 1804, Nicholson MSS. Libr. Cong.

[3] July 20, 1804, *Monroe Papers*, v. 10, Libr. Cong.

[4] J. R. to Monroe, Dec. 5, 1806, *Monroe Papers*, v. 11, Libr. Cong.; J. R. to Nicholson, Dec. 21, 1806, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

[5] Jan. 2, 1807, *Monroe Papers*, v. 11, Libr. Cong.

"Col. Burr (*quantum mutatus ab illo!*) passed by my door the day before yesterday under a strong guard. So I am told, for I did not see him, and nobody hereabouts is acquainted with his person. The soldiers escorting him (it seems) indulged his aversion to be publicly known and, to guard against inquiry as much as possible, he was accoutred in a shabby suit of homespun, with an old white hat flapped over his face (the dress in which he was apprehended). From the description and, indeed, the confession of the commanding officer to one of my neighbors, I have no doubt it was Burr himself. His very manner of travelling, although under arrest, was characteristic of the man—enveloped in mystery—and, should he be hanged for treason, I dare say he will 'feel the ruling passion strong in death,' and contrive to make posterity doubt whether he was actually executed, or whether (as was alleged in the case of the Duke of Monmouth) some counterfeit did not suffer in his place."[1]

From the Diary, which places our finger on so many of the silent yet vital pulsations of Randolph's life, we learn just how he reached Richmond (*a*), in answer to the summons which had doubtless been issued for him as a member of the Grand Jury panel. It contains this entry under the date of May 23, 1807: "Theodore [his cousin Theodore Dudley] and myself rode down in a day (the 21st), I on Brunette, he on the grey gelding, by Dare Devil; Johnny [his black body servant] and Tudor [his nephew] in the chair. Burr's trial." From Bizarre to Richmond, as the crow flies, is between fifty and sixty miles we should say. But, after Randolph had arrived at Richmond and had been made foreman of the Burr Grand Jury, there was no final action that the jury could take until James Wilkinson, the principal witness for the prosecution, who was coming up from Louisiana to Virginia by sea, could appear before it and testify. While awaiting Wilkinson, he became almost impatient enough to exclaim, as George Hay,

[1] Mar. 25, 1807, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

one of the lawyers who prosecuted Burr is said to have done after he had become worn out with the interminable wrangle of the case: "Would that I could only hang upon a gate and have a little negro to swing me to and fro all day."[1]

"I have been detained here near a week by Burr's trial," Randolph wrote to Nicholson six days after his arrival in Richmond, "Where it is to end (I might say begin) is more than I can presume to conjecture. . . . So much for this troublesome little man."[2]

Three days later, he wrote to Monroe that the Grand Jury had been detained ever since the 22d for the coming of Wilkinson, who, it was confidently said by some, might be expected with the Greek kalends, and not before. "There are, I am told," he said, "upwards of forty witnesses in town; one of whom (General Jackson of Tennessee) does not scruple to say that W. [Wilkinson] is a pensioner of Spain to his knowledge, and that he will not dare to show his face here."[3] Washington Irving, who had come down to Richmond to report the proceedings of the trial for a New York newspaper, wrote to Mrs. Hoffman that the Grand Jury had been dismissed for five or six days so "that they might go home, see their wives, get their clothes washed and flog their negroes."[4] Not until June 17th, did Wilkinson appear at Richmond, but when the fat, corrupt and perfidious braggart and informer strode into the court room, attired in the showy uniform of the Commanding General of the American Army, Irving wrote to James K. Paulding that Wilkinson strutted into court and . . . stood for a moment swelling like a turkey cock.[5] The same

[1] *Life of Burr*, by Parton, 482.
[2] May 27, 1807, Nicholson MSS. Libr. Cong.
[3] May 30, 1807, *Monroe Papers*, v. 12, Libr. Cong.
[4] June 4, 1807, *Life*, by P. M. Irving, v. 1, 191.
[5] June 22, 1807, *Id.*, 195.

captivating writer has given us a description of the manner in which the intrepid adventurer confronted the fellow-conspirator, who had betrayed him. Burr ignored him until the Chief Justice directed the clerk to swear General Wilkinson. Then Burr, at the sound of the name, turned his head, looked Wilkinson full in the face with one of his piercing regards, swept his eye over his whole person from head to foot as if to scan its dimensions, and then coolly resumed his former position, and went on conversing with his counsel as tranquilly as ever.[1] Highly characteristic was the account which Wilkinson gave to Jefferson of the same incident:

"I saluted the Bench, and, in spite of myself, my eyes darted a flash of indignation at the little traitor on whom they continued fixed until I was called to the Book. Here, sir, I found my expectations verified. The lion-hearted, eagle-eyed hero, sinking under the weight of conscious guilt with haggard eye, made an effort to meet the indignant salutation of outraged honor; but it was in vain. His audacity failed him. He averted his face, grew pale and affected passion to conceal his perturbation."[2]

After other witnesses had testified before the Grand Jury, Wilkinson appeared before it, and testified too; and, in doing so, he produced the famous despatch in cipher in which Burr had assured him that he would be second to him only in his enterprise, and grandiosely declared that the gods invited them to glory and fortune; and that it remained to be seen whether they deserved the boon. By Sawyer we are told that the key with which Wilkinson deciphered the despatch seemed unintelligible to all of the jurors except Randolph, who mastered it at once and explained it to the comprehension of the others.[3] The story

[1] Letter to J. K. Paulding, *supra*.
[2] June 17, 1807, "Letters in Relation," MSS. Libr. Cong.
[3] P. 28.

is not improbable, for his insight was very rapid, and Henry Adams, not without reason, has pronounced him to have been possessed of a true bloodhound instinct.[1] The delivery of Wilkinson's testimony consumed four days. After he had been testifying for two, Washington Irving wrote to Paulding: "Wilkinson is now before the Grand Jury, and has such a mighty mass of words to deliver himself of that he claims at least two days more to discharge the wondrous cargo."[2] Two days later, Randolph wrote to Nicholson that the Grand Jury had found bills for treason and misdemeanor against both Burr and Herman Blennerhassett, his dupe (*Una voce*), and that the next day it had presented Jonathan Dayton, Ex-Senator John Smith of Ohio, Comfort Tyler, Israel Smith of New York, and Davis Floyd of Indiana too for treason.[3] When this letter was written, Wilkinson, despite his long palaver, had all but been indicted himself; seven out of the sixteen grand Jurors, fourteen of whom were Republicans, having voted in favor of indictment.[4] According to Sawyer, indictment was suggested by Randolph.[5] Be this as it may, Wilkinson's escape filled him with intense regret and disgust; partly because he justly believed Wilkinson, as almost all of the grand Jurors did, to be an arrant scoundrel, and partly because he was eager to rebuke the countenance which Jefferson was compelled by his desire to convict Burr to give to such a valuable state's evidence. In the letter to Nicholson from which we have just quoted, Randolph said:

"But the mammoth of iniquity escaped; not that any man pretended to think him *innocent*, but upon certain wire-drawn distinctions that I will not pester you with. W—n [Wilkinson]

[1] *Hist. of U. S.*, v. 3, 456.
[2] June 22, 1807, *supra*.
[3] June 25, 1807, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.
[4] McCaleb, 335.
[5] P. 28.

is the only man that I ever saw who was from the bark to the very core a villain."[1]

In a subsequent letter to Nicholson, Randolph returns to the subject with unabated virulence: "W. is the most finished scoundrel that ever lived; a ream of paper would not contain all the proofs; but what of that? He is 'the man whom the King delights to honor.'"[2] Randolph then brings to the attention of Nicholson certain alterations which had been made in the cipher despatch by Wilkinson, and adds:

"These are a few of the specimens with which I could fill this letter. Under examination all was confusion of language and looks. Such a countenance never did I behold. There was scarcely a variance of opinion amongst us as to his guilt. Yet this miscreant is hugged to the bosom of the government whilst Monroe is denounced."

And, if the reader is not wearied with all this objurgation, we might refer also to a later letter from Randolph to Nicholson, in which he says that he had been informed that Wirt had never been imposed upon by Wilkinson, and that Hay had admitted to him, with his own lips, that he had been, and had represented Wilkinson as the most artful scoundrel in existence. And Randolph then ends this letter by dubbing Wilkinson as "the Spanish pensioner"; which in fact it is now known that he was.[3] In still another letter to Nicholson, Randolph told him that, after the Grand Jury had returned to Wilkinson the papers which he had submitted to it, Wilkinson, whose busy active genius had to have employment, went to work upon them, erasing, interlining, etc., and then swore that they were identically the same papers which he had handed to the

[1] June 25, 1807, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

[2] June 28, 1807, *Id.*

[3] Nov. 8, 1807, *Id.*; Yrujo to Cevallos, Jan. 28, 1807, MSS. *Spanish Archives; Hist. of U. S.*, by H. Adams, v. 3, 342.

Grand Jury; but that Littleton Waller Tazewell, who, with several other members of the Grand Jury, had taken a copy of the papers, had been called in and had convicted Wilkinson of forgery and perjury. And then, after mentioning a flagrant instance in which Wilkinson's testimony before the Burr petit jury had flatly contradicted his testimony before the Grand Jury, Randolph informs Nicholson confidentially that Hay had told him that, when Daniel Clark, who had been deeply implicated in Burr's schemes, came on to Richmond during the trial, Wilkinson approached Hay within a few minutes after Clark's arrival, terrified beyond description, and declared that Clark could ruin him.[1]

There is a kind of shame-faced satisfaction to be found in the fact that the general disrepute in which Wilkinson was held resulted during the Burr trial in a personal attack upon him by Samuel Swartwout, one of Burr's accomplices, who was at the time a young man of twenty-four. Meeting Wilkinson at Richmond, he yielded to a sudden paroxysm of disgust and rage and shouldered him into the middle of the street—an insult which Wilkinson submissively swallowed. As likely as not the outrage was instigated by Andrew Jackson, who had come on to Richmond to be present at the Burr trial, and had conducted himself in such a spirit of reckless partisanship as to draw down upon his head, before it had terminated, the harsh judgment to which one of his contemporaries afterwards referred in these words: "As I was crossing the Court House Green, I heard a great noise of haranguing at some distance off. Inquiring what it was, I was told it was a great blackguard from Tennessee, one Andrew Jackson, making a speech for Burr and damning Jefferson as a persecutor."[2] At any rate, Jackson was "wild with delight" when he was told of the indignity to which Wilkinson had

[1] Sept. 1, 1808, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

[2] *Life of Burr*, by Parton, 458.

been subjected by Swartwout. After the trial ended, Swartwout challenged Wilkinson to a duel, but again the other cock would not fight. Wilkinson contented himself with magniloquently announcing that "he held no correspondence with traitors or conspirators"; whereupon Swartwout posted him in the press as guilty of treachery, perjury, forgery and cowardice.[1] Swartwout's apparent frankness created a highly favorable impression upon the Grand Jury when he appeared before it and positively denied that he had ever made to Wilkinson the revelations to which Wilkinson had testified. But even then the youthful adherent of Burr, who was afterwards, as the Collector of the Port of New York, to rob the Federal Government of some million and a quarter dollars, was probably a fit subject for the application of the legal maxim, *Noscitur ex sociis.*

Randolph was again elected to Congress in 1807, and, when the Tenth Congress convened on Oct. 26, 1807, Joseph B. Varnum, of Massachusetts, was elected Speaker in the place of Macon.[2] Two days later, Varnum appointed George W. Campbell, of Tennessee, whom Randolph termed on one occasion "That Prince of Prigs and Puppies,"[3] to the Chairmanship of the Committee of Ways and Means, of which Randolph had so long been the incumbent. Among the other members appointed by the Speaker were Smilie, Eppes, and Willis Alston. The new Speaker, in the opinion of Josiah Quincy, was "one of the most obsequious tools of the administration, elected through the influence of Jefferson, who courted with the most extreme assiduity the leaders of the democracy of Massachusetts."[4] "He was just capable," Quincy further said, "of going through the routine of the office—an *au-*

[1] *Blennerhassett Papers*, 459–60 (footnote).
[2] *A. of C.*, 1807–8, v. 1, 782.
[3] *Id.*, 794; J. R. to Nicholson, Feb. 17, 1807, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.
[4] *Life of Quincy*, 116.

tomaton ready to move in any direction the magician who pulled the strings jerked him." To Quincy, too, we owe the following story about him in connection with his habit of writing letters, while members of the House were supposed to be appealing to his reasoning powers and passions:

"Randolph was speaking one day, and Mr. Speaker thought he was safe for an hour or two, and began privily to indite a letter. It was not long before the hawk's eye of Randolph spied out the inattention and he stopped short in the middle of a sentence. Mr. Speaker was presently aroused by the stillness, and, supposing that Randolph had done speaking, he returned to his duty, and, seeing the eccentric Virginian still on his legs, inquired whether the honorable gentleman had finished his speech. 'Mr. Speaker,' returned Randolph in his high falsetto voice, and pointing his long forefinger at his victim, 'Mr. Speaker, I was waiting until you had finished that letter.'"[1]

According to an important memorandum in Randolph's Diary, he had good reason to believe that his deposition from the Chairmanship of the Committee of Ways and Means had been desired by Jefferson at the beginning of the second session of the Ninth Congress. The memorandum is in these words:

"About the commencement of the second session of the Ninth Congress, Mr. J. asked the Secretary of the Treasury [Gallatin] who would be Chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means. Mr. G. said J. R. J. said it would never do. G. replied that, *as Chairman* of W. and M., J. R. had given all proper support to his measures of finance, and that he could see no objection to his appointment. J. 'who else could be selected?' G. 'There is no one else fit for the chair of that committee but J. Clay, and, in case Randolph should not be here, which I think not improbable, Macon, I have no doubt,

[1] *Life of Quincy*, 133.

will appoint him.' (There was a report that I would not be at the opening of the session.) J. '*J. Clay will not do; he is Randolph's friend*, but Macon will not have an opportunity of appointing him as the Committees will be selected by ballot.' Accordingly a proposition to that effect was brought forward by Mr. Sloan. I have this information from the most direct and authentic sources."

The first sitting of the Tenth Congress was marked by a painful incident. When a third ballot was about to be taken for the election of a Clerk of the House, Randolph arose and objected to the election of Nicholas B. Van Zandt, who had led his rivals on the two preceding ballots, on the ground that, during a secret sitting, at the first session of the Ninth Congress, when Van Zandt was the chief assistant of the Clerk of the House, he and the other assistants of that officer had posted themselves at the door of the House gallery, where every word uttered on the floor of the House could be distinctly heard. Before he reached his lodgings at Georgetown, after the adjournment on this occasion, some of the words used by him during the sitting, Randolph declared, had been repeated to him.[1] At the conclusion of Randolph's remarks, a letter was read from Van Zandt in which he asked for an opportunity to repel this charge of eavesdropping, but, by a decisive vote, the request was denied; and, on the third ballot, he lost a large number of the votes which had been cast for him on the preceding ballots; and another individual was elected.

The idea has been thrown out by Sawyer and adopted by Henry Adams that Randolph was biased against Van Zandt from the fact that the latter was a protégé of Mrs. Madison.[2] If John Quincy Adams was properly informed, he was also a relation of the Vice-President, George Clinton, of New York,[3] to whom Randolph was very partial.

[1] *A. of C.*, 1807–8, v. 1, 784.

[2] Sawyer, 34; *John Randolph*, 223.

[3] *Memoirs*, v. 1, 487.

Aside from the mere insinuation of Sawyer, there is no evidence, so far as we know, that Randolph, in objecting to the election of Van Zandt, was influenced by anything except what he actually made the foundation of the objection. The fact that Van Zandt's application for a hearing was so peremptorily refused by the House, and the fact that John Quincy Adams sets him down in his *Memoirs* as a worthless character,[1] should, together with the facts stated by Randolph himself, be duly taken into account, as well as the long, dignified and positive affidavit in which Van Zandt denied the accusation made against him by Randolph.[2]

So far as Randolph is concerned, the earlier debates of the Tenth Congress are particularly significant in showing that it would be a gross error to infer from his hostility to standing armies, the Spanish Purchase, the Gregg Resolution, the Non-Importation Law and the War of 1812 that he was a pacifist. In 1807, he had as poor an opinion of our professional soldiers as when he had been called sharply to task by the Federalists for terming them "rag-a-muffins." "Was there," he is reported as asking on one occasion, "no difference between freemen, possessed of information and property, and wretches picked up in the streets [and] educated in ale-houses, such as composed their standing army?"[3] And, filled with a sense of national humiliation, as well as national resentment, by the helplessness of the *Chesapeake* under the broadsides of the *Leopard*, a mental condition to which his intimacy with Stephen Decatur perhaps largely contributed, he so far forgot himself on another occasion as to say that our regular navy had for years proved a mere moth in the public purse.[4] Nor did he hesitate to voice his lack of faith in the gunboats which Jefferson's inventive mind was so eager that the American Navy should spawn in great numbers.

[1] *Memoirs*, v. 1, 488.
[2] *A. of C.*, 1807–8, v. 1, 785 (note). [3] *Id.*, 1021. [4] *Id.*, 834.

"Mr. R.," is the report "put little confidence in the regular navy, as it was called, which just sufficed to bait the war-trap, or in the gunboats. Like the contemptible insects, to which they had been compared by their advocates, it was hoped that they would find shelter in their insignificance; but, if they should prove instruments of annoyance, eventually they would be turned against ourselves."[1]

And, referring to outrages, committed upon our national dignity by the British men-of-war, that hovered about our coasts, he also asserted that it was found that, with all the navy of the United States and all their gunboats into the bargain, they could not maintain their authority within their own jurisdiction, and yet they were called upon to build more—something in the style of the physician in the comedy who prescribed bleeding, and, although, at every operation, the patient was visibly worse, had no resource but in a repetition of it.[2] But, while condemning these various instrumentalities of national defense, he was tireless and outspoken to the last degree in urging that the whole body of our citizenry, capable of bearing arms, should be thoroughly armed, and that trains of artillery, capable of being shifted rapidly from one of our endangered seaports to another, should be relied upon for the purpose of repelling foreign invasion[3] instead of coast fortifications, which he seems to have feared might, like broken dykes in Holland, keep the sea in instead of out. "No discipline," he truly affirmed, "could make soldiers of men who mustered with canes and cornstalks,"[4] and our experience, during the American Revolution, might have told him that no discipline could make soldiers of men who were soldiers only in the sense that they were armed with something better than canes and cornstalks. But it should be remembered that many a day of bitter experience was yet to elapse, and that human invention

[1] *A. of C.*, 1807–8, v. 1, 1169.
[2] *Id.*, 1136. [3] *Id.*, 1003, 1169. [4] *Id.*, 1021.

was yet to swing Europe and America alongside of each other, like two death-laden, grappling men-of-war, before other Americans besides Randolph could be made to believe that hardy and efficient soldiers cannot be grown over night. Sound or unsound, his military ideas were enforced with all his vivid phrasing. "All the parchment in their archives," he is reported to have said, "was of less force than a single musket in maintaining the liberties of the citizen."[1] Another utterance of his, suggested by Jefferson's gunboat crotchet, was that he wished to see the nation armed and protected, not by a provision of sugar and salt but of men and iron.[2] And again he is reported as saying:

> "The House were told that they ought to exercise a rigid economy in the present posture of affairs, but he trusted it would not be an economy of arms; economy of words, of time, of laws and proclamations and of money, too, upon useless and fantastic projects, was highly desirable—economy of anything if you will, but of arms in the hands of the people."[3]

Stern to the verge of rashness was his language immediately after the outrage upon the *Chesapeake*. He thought that, on the capture of the *Chesapeake*, Congress ought to have been immediately convened and our Ministers at London instantly recalled, after having made an explicit and peremptory demand for redress—and that redress too to be by a British Envoy dispatched to the United States for the especial purpose; that, Congress being convened, the nation should have been put into a posture of defence, while waiting a reasonable time to receive redress by an Envoy; and that, redress being refused, instant retaliation should have been taken on the offending party. He would have invaded Canada and Nova Scotia, and made a descent on Jamaica, he also said; but he would have seized

[1] *A. of C.*, 1807–8, v. 1, 1021. [2] *Id.*, 1134. [3] *Id.*, 1025.

upon Canada and Nova Scotia, not with a view to their incorporation into our system of government but as pledges to be retained against a future pacification until we had obtained ample redress for our wrongs.[1] And, as usual, he succeeded in giving an highly original form to his ideas:

"We had received a blow," he said, "and it was out of the question to enter into the merits of the disputes which had produced it. To Great Britain the door of discussion was shut, was barred, and she must knock with *the light tap of solicitation* before it could be opened to her."[2]

He was to live to hear her knock, not with the light tap of solicitation, but with the iron knuckles of destructive wrath.

A proper companion-piece to these military views of Randolph is the highly eloquent speech in which he urged upon the country a proper provision for the veterans of the Revolutionary War.

"But there was," he said, "another and more important measure which ought to precede any step which the House might take for defence. It was a measure of justice, which would not only entitle them to success, but was eminently calculated to insure it; a measure which would unite all hearts and nerve every hand in the cause of their country. It would do away with the stigma of suffering those who had fought and bled in their service to starve in the streets. With what face could the government call upon the youth of the Nation to turn out in the public defence, when their eyes were everywhere assailed by the spectacle of their countrymen and kindred—veterans of the Revolution, who had raised the proud fabric of our independence—begging from door to door a morsel of bread? It was impossible to contemplate the condition of these gallant men, who, after giving to their country everything, were consigned by it to beggary and want, without

[1] *A. of C.*, 1807–8, v. 1, 849. [2] *Id.*, 851.

sensations of indignation and shame, as well as of commiseration. But it is a subject on which I will say no more; I cannot supply feelings to those who are destitute of them, and I should as soon undertake to raise the very dead as to excite those whom the subject itself is unable to move."[1]

The hard words that Randolph had been in the habit of using about Wilkinson resulted in a challenge to a duel. On Dec. 24, 1807, Wilkinson wrote to Randolph that he understood that several expressions had escaped Randolph in their nature personal and highly injurious to his reputation; that Randolph had avowed the opinion that he was a rogue; had charged him with the disposition to commit murder to prevent the disclosure of his sinister designs; and had stigmatized in his person the entire American army. And the letter concluded with these words:

"Under these impressions, I have no hesitation to appeal to your justice, your magnanimity and your gallantry, to prescribe the manner of redress, being persuaded your decision will comport with the feelings of a man of honor—that you will be found equally prompt to assert a right or repair a wrong."[2]

To this letter Randolph replied as follows:

"Sir: Several months ago, I was informed of your having said that you were acquainted with what had passed in the Grand Jury room at Richmond last spring, and that you declared a determination to challenge me. I am to consider your letter of the last night by mail as the execution of that avowed purpose, and, through the same channel, I return you my answer. Whatever may have been the expressions used by me in regard to your character, they were the result of deliberate opinion, founded on the most authoritative evidence, the greater part of which my country imposed upon me to weigh and decide upon; they were such as to my knowledge and to yours have been delivered by the first men in the Union and

[1] *A. of C.*, 1807–8, v. 1, 1004.
[2] Bouldin, 138.

probably by a full moiety of the American people. In you, sir, I recognize no right to hold me accountable for my public or private opinion of your character that would not subject me to an equal claim from Colonel Burr or Sergeant Dunbaugh. I cannot descend to your level. This is my final answer."[1]

Six days later, Randolph produced on the floor of the House documents tending to convict Wilkinson of having been a pensioner of the Spanish Crown, and on them based a resolution requesting the President to cause an inquiry to be instituted into his conduct.[2] Afterwards, in a speech in the House, relating to the same matter, Randolph not only referred to Wilkinson as a person, of whom he had been compelled on his oath to say that he believed him to be guilty of misprision of treason, but as a person whom he believed, upon the very best evidence, to have been guilty six or eight years before of peculation.[3] In a later speech, Randolph said that the motion before the Burr Grand Jury to present Wilkinson for misprision of treason had failed merely because the overt act, on which it was founded, had been laid in Ohio, and not in Virginia, and for another purely technical reason. He did not hear, however, he declared, a single member of the Grand Jury express any other opinion than his own as respects the moral guilt of the accused.[4] It remains for us to say further that, after receiving Randolph's reply to his first letter, Wilkinson did not let the matter rest there. In a rejoinder, he appealed to Randolph to embrace the alternative still within his reach and *to rise to the level* of a gentleman,[5] and even said in addition: "The first idea, suggested by your letter in response to mine, was the chastisement of my cane, from which the sacred respect I owe to the station you occupy in the councils of the nation alone protected you." Not content with this, Wilkinson

[1] Bouldin, 138.
[2] *A. of C.*, 1806–7, v. 1, 1258, 1261.
[3] *Id.*, 1345. [4] *Id.*, 1397. [5] Sawyer, 36.

also posted Randolph throughout the District of Columbia in handbills containing these words: "Hector unmasked: In justice to my character, I denounce John Randolph, M. C., to the world as a prevaricating, base, calumniating scoundrel, poltroon and coward."[1] This episode in the life of Randolph is mentioned by Henry Adams in support of his statement that Randolph never pressed a quarrel to the end or resented an insult further than to repel it.[2] If recalled at all for any such purpose, it should have been recalled in support of a statement that Randolph was a craven; one, of course, that no one, not bereft of reason, could well make. The very biographer, Sawyer, who quotes the handbill in full in his pages was in Congress with Randolph for sixteen years, and was keenly alive to all his infirmities and foibles; and yet he tells us: "He [Randolph] possessed courage in a high degree."[3] Indeed, it is hard to understand to just what measure of personal courage our New England fellow-craftsmen in the biographical walk desire to hold Randolph. Speaking of a correspondence between Randolph and Daniel Webster, in which Randolph, at any rate, thought that he saw the possibility of a duel, Henry Cabot Lodge says, in his life of Webster, published in the same biographical series as Henry Adams' *John Randolph*, "Randolph, however, would have challenged anybody or anything from Henry Clay to a field-mouse if the fancy happened to strike him."[4] In declining to accept Wilkinson's challenge, Randolph was actuated by such obvious motives, arising out of his public relations to the Burr Trial, that it is fairly questionable whether Wilkinson, who had but recently not only declined Swartwout's challenge, but had tamely permitted himself to be jostled into the street by Swartwout, would have sent a challenge to Randolph at all, if he had not felt sure that these motives would operate just as they did. Besides, Wilkinson, himself a fellow-conspirator of Burr,

[1] Sawyer, 36. [2] *J. R.*, 261. [3] P. 125. [4] P. 67.

had declined to fight Swartwout because the latter was a fellow-conspirator of Burr. What reason had he to believe that Randolph, an honest man and no conspirator at all, would not decline to fight him, who was generally believed to have been a fellow-conspirator of Burr, or, in plain terms, a traitor, and would have been so pronounced by the Burr Grand Jury of which Randolph was foreman, but for a technicality? It is a mistake to suppose, if any well-informed person does, that the duelling code imposed the obligation upon a man to fight anyone who chose to challenge him. That code was a strict, and, in some respects, a highly artificial and technical, one; not less rigorous in its reservations than in its mandates; and it required no gentleman to accept a challenge from any individual whose social standing was manifestly plebeian, or whose moral repute was despicably bad. We may laugh at such niceties now, as we may laugh at the distinctions which once prevailed between noble and churl; but there was a time when they might be as significant of life and death as the subtlest theological shadings ever were. It is true that Wilkinson wore the epaulet of an American General; and that ought to have meant no little in both a social and moral sense; but, in his case, it can be truly said that it meant nothing but increased opportunity for profitable treachery, insolent tyranny, extravagance, and waste. In the general estimation, he was a corrupt, boastful pretender who had disgraced his profession by his venality and perfidy. By Winfield Scott he was deemed an "unprincipled imbecile."[1] To Randolph's friend Bryan, whose forms of speech were more idiomatic, he was "that stinkpot"[2]; and such thousands of other Americans both thought and felt him to be, and his standing with posterity is even worse than it was with his contemporaries, though it knows nothing about him that was not at least strongly suspected by them.

[1] *Autobiog.*, 94, note.

[2] Letter to J. R., June 11, 1809, Bryan MSS.

Enumerating the Brigadier Generals of the American Army in 1812, McMaster says: "At the head of the list of Brigadier Generals stood the name of James Wilkinson, the most infamous man then wearing the uniform of the United States."[1] (*a*) That under no circumstances, public, or otherwise, could Randolph have properly considered himself answerable to a challenge from such a worthless and odious character as this, is too plain we think to warrant further words. He might as well have challenged Matthew Lyon for saying, in the course of the Yazoo debates, in his blackguard way, that he had a face like that of a monkey. Certainly Randolph could not have accepted a challenge from Wilkinson without violating the carefully qualified principles of conduct which he was to lay down a few years later in a letter to Theodore Dudley:

"I am glad to find that you *can* and *do* amuse yourself with field sports; but I hope you will take care how you exchange shots with any but *gentlemen;* and even with them that you will have your quarrel just. A man would cut a pitiful figure who should lose his life in a brawl with such fellows as you describe your unknown adversary to be. We should study that our deaths, as well as our lives, should be innocent, if not honorable and glorious; so that our friends should have no cause to blush for the folly or rashness of either. At the same time, be assured, my dear Theodore, that, of all the defects in the human character, there is none that I should so much deprecate for my friend or myself as want of spirit and *firmness*."[2]

In December, 1807, Great Britain and France, in their furious endeavors to ham-string each other, had, by their orders in council and decrees, done everything in their power to interdict totally commercial intercourse between the United States and each other. But, in spite of all their

[1] *History of People of the U. S.*, v. 3, 546.
[2] *Letters to a Y. R.*, 109.

tyrannous and lawless proclamations, a large amount of our carrying-trade still continued to slip between their outstretched palms, and to contribute to the sum of our national wealth. Pending this state of things, Jefferson, too prone to peace to counsel a declaration of war against both Great Britain and France, or either, and too conscious of the humiliating nature of the existing situation to leave American commerce alone to arm and take care of itself, as it best could, as John Randolph[1] and John Adams advised, sent a message to Congress recommending to its consideration "an inhibition of the departure" of American vessels from the ports of the United States. The message referred to the great and increasing dangers, with which our vessels, our seamen, and our merchandise were threatened on the high seas and elsewhere by the belligerent European Powers and declared that it was of "the greatest importance to keep in safety those essential resources." On the strength of this message, Randolph moved an embargo on all shipping belonging to citizens of the United States which was then, or should thereafter arrive, in our ports. This was on Dec. 18, 1807. Two days later, the House laid this resolution aside and took up a Senate bill which provided for a general and permanent embargo. This bill, the supplementary bills in aid of its purposes which followed it, the bill which sought to suspend it, and the non-importation bill, prohibiting all commercial intercourse with Great Britain into which it finally trickled out, were all warmly opposed by Randolph with every resource that practical sagacity, a lively imagination, pointed wit, and an inexhaustible capacity for prompt and sparkling expression can furnish to a speaker. Indeed, of Randolph throughout the Tenth Session of Congress might well be said what Henry Adams has said of him when comparing him with the other participants in one of the debates of that session: "With all John Ran-

[1] *A. of C.*, 1808–9, v. 3, 1339.

dolph's waywardness and extravagance, he alone shone among this mass of mediocrities, and, like the water snakes in Coleridge's silent ocean, his every track was a flash of golden fire."[1] By Henry Adams, however, Randolph has been criticized for opposing the Senate Embargo Bill, after offering a resolution himself looking to an embargo.[2] And Sawyer has ascribed his supposed change of front to "jealousy of another's success in carrying through so important a measure" as the Senate bill.[3] But it must be remembered that the long debate, which took place over the Senate bill, was entirely in secret session, and that it is improbable that Randolph would have executed such an abrupt *volte-face* as is imputed to him without giving reasons therefor in the debate that, if known to us, might impart a wholly different aspect to the matter. We do know that in a letter to Nicholson he said:

"Come here I beseech you. I will then show you how impossible it was for me to have voted for the embargo. *The circumstances under which it presented itself were peculiar and compelled me to oppose it;* although otherwise a favorite measure with me, as you well know."[4] [Italics ours].

The main circumstance, to which his words refer, was, doubtless, the fact that the Presidential Message, on which his resolution was founded, suggested an embargo, which, as the Message indicated on its face, was to be employed, not for the purpose of bringing Great Britain and France to their knees by inflicting pecuniary loss upon them, but merely for the purpose of securing the safety of our vessels, seamen, and merchandise; whereas the embargo, contemplated by the Senate bill, was a general one, unlimited in point of time and space. To realize how material such a difference was to Randolph we need not go further than Henry Adams himself, who tells us that he

[1] *Hist. of U. S.*, v. 4, 379. [2] *Id.*, 174. [3] P. 37.
[4] Dec. 24, 1807, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

argued against the constitutionality of the embargo in a speech, never reported, which turned upon the distinction between regulating commerce and destroying it.[1] In his private conduct, especially in later life, and, perhaps, even at moments when his actions could not be justly referred to mental disturbance, Randolph was at times wayward and capricious. But, contrasted with the fixed principles by which his political conduct was habitually governed, his occasional changes of conviction, assuming that there were any worthy of serious mention, are as of little real moment as the swayings with wind and tide of a firmly anchored vessel. Anything more merciless than the showers of bright-feathered and occasionally poison-tipped arrows that Randolph discharged at one after the other of Jefferson's restrictive measures, it would be difficult to conceive. Nor are his speeches on the subject more remarkable for their pungency and vivid imagery than for that vigorous common sense, that strong grasp upon primal realities, which took him out of the mere category of brilliant orators and placed him in the higher category of statesmen. And in few, if any, of his other speeches can we find better illustrations of his faculty for reaching striking conclusions without the aid of formal argumentative processes—like the lightning which is so eager and swift to attain its goal as to be lost at times to the eye in its transit. The fatuity of the embargo, the idea that there was nothing for the insulted dignity of American commerce to do except like an affronted Japanese to commit *hari kari*, came in for his unsparing ridicule. What he said is thus reported:

"This mode of cutting our throats to save our lives I do not understand. To what extent did the argument go? Fully to this—that in proportion as the belligerents pressed upon us we must recede, and so promptly and rapidly too as never to come

[1] *Hist. of U. S.*, v. 4, 265.

in contact with them. This was certainly an admirable recipe for avoiding war; one by which the swift-footed Achilles himself might have kept out of the combat since he had only to take his distance from the enemy and keep it. He did not expect to have heard because any branch of our commerce was annoyed by the belligerents that we should therefore annoy it ourselves to a yet greater degree; that because it was liable to partial attack we should annihilate it."[1]

Equally bitter was this stroke:

"And yet to avoid this war, in which we are actually involved, we are to do what? Show our heels to the enemy and our indignant fronts to our own hapless citizens. It was high time that the vigor of this Government (if any it had, and he believed it had more than any in the world) should be displayed on some other theatre than our own country and on some other objects than our own citizens."[2]

Another neat example in the same speech of the same kind of keen-edged raillery was this:

"The State governments were supported generally by direct taxes, but, if the supply from commerce be taken away, the General Government must resort to the same mode of taxation, and what would be the consequence? A conflict between the sheriff and the marshal for the property of the citizen, and, when this was exhausted for his person; which he supposed, like the child in the judgment of Solomon, must be divided between the two claimants."[3]

The embargo, we now know, of course, deserved all the condemnation that it provoked. We disputed with Great Britain about her practice of impressing our seamen, and, under the operation of the embargo, our seamen were compelled to leave their country altogether and to enlist in the British Navy or merchant marine. We differed with Great Britain about our carrying-trade from the

[1] *A. of C.*, 1808–9, v. 3, 680. [2] *Id.*, 686. [3] *Id.*, 679.

West Indies to Europe, but, by shutting up all our ships in our own ports, we surrendered to her the whole commerce of the world, and that under conditions too that necessarily worked in her favor a large reduction in the wages of seamen. The British West Indies long verged upon ruin, and, year after year, petitioned Parliament, complaining that they were undersold by the colonies of France, whose produce was transported abroad in neutral bottoms, chiefly American, free of war risks and charges; but the United States did for them more than their own government would do. By wholly withdrawing from commerce, we conferred upon them the monopoly of supplying Europe with colonial produce, and upon Great Britain the monopoly of carrying it. The effect of the embargo was to furnish rogues with the opportunity of getting rich at the expense of honest men by encouraging smuggling and similar clandestine and unlawful practices, and by inducing capital, which, but for the embargo, would have sought employment in commerce, to go into the profiteering business of buying up vast quantities of domestic commodities, of the first importance to human wants, from distressed farmers or other owners who could not find a market for them abroad as usual; engrossing them; and imposing them later upon the necessities of the people at enormous percentages of profit. Aside from the direct pecuniary loss inflicted upon the people of the United States by forbidding them to sail the seas and cutting them off from all foreign vents for the products of their industry, long after the rotting ships of New England had been liberated from the silent wharves, to which they had been moored by the embargo, and, long after the Southern planter had again found a market for his grain and tobacco, the demoralizing and depraving habits, bred by the speculative lawlessness and rapacity, born of the embargo, were bound to make their influence still felt in the life of the country. Such was the field, with more or less latitude,

over which Randolph, in some instances, in our very words, ranged in his speeches on the embargo and its affiliated measures during the Tenth Congress; and, with such easy power, did he do it that, in following him on one occasion after he had made a speech, which consumed hours in its delivery, Mr. Love, of Virginia, no friend of his, said: "I rise under circumstances of extreme discouragement to address you, Sir, while the sound of a voice which never fails to interest in a superior degree still vibrates on my ear."[1] With the Tenth Congress, Jefferson's second term as President came to an end, and Randolph was not slow to compare it with his first. "Without the slightest disposition to create unpleasant sensations, to go back upon the footsteps of the last four years," he said:

"I do unequivocally say that I believe the country will never see such another administration as the last. It had my hearty approbation for one-half of its career. As to my opinion of the remainder of it, it has been no secret. The lean kine of Pharaoh devoured the fat kine. The last four years, with the embargo in their train, ate up the rich harvest of the first four, and, if we had not had some Joseph to step in, and change the state of things, what would have been now the condition of the country? I repeat it; never has there been any administration which went out of office and left the nation in a state so deplorable and calamitous as the last."[2]

The embargo, he was to say on another occasion, "like Achilles' wrath, was the source of our Iliad of Woes."[3]

Before passing from the Tenth Congress, it will be well to communicate to the reader the impression made by Randolph upon Edward Hooper, a native of Connecticut, who saw him for the first time in the month of December,

[1] *A. of C.*, 1808–9, v. 3, 688.
[2] *Id.*, 1809–10, v. 1, 68.
[3] Garland, v. 1, 213.

1808, in the House, and portrayed him as he presented himself to him immediately afterwards in his diary. (*a*)

"Mr. John Randolph made a few desultory remarks, prefacing a motion of adjournment. I hardly ever in my life felt so interested in the speech of another, especially a speech of merely an accidental, careless nature. A person rose—to appearances a boy of about 15 or 16—resembling in countenance young Martin of the South Carolina College. A voice quite shrill but very boyish, and a look quite effeminate, I supposed it some newly elected and very young member who was not about to do much, but observed that he rose and spoke with perfect composure and confidence. His figure and his voice much resembled those of my classmate Elliot. I asked who it was, and was told J. Randolph. I was struck with astonishment. In one point of view, I saw a tall, slim boy, who had all the time been sitting in a remote part of the House with his shoulders shrugged up and his light drab surtout closely buttoned up to his chin; a large pair of gloves or mittens on his hands, and his slim legs, with white top boots, thrown impolitely over the top of the next row of seats, as though he was a mere silent, indifferent spectator, or else, perhaps, too bashful to come forward in sight and take an active part. He got up and said he was fairly tired down with that discussion, which had been so long protracted from day to day, boldly and pointedly accused the speaker of wandering from the subject, said the greatest part of the arguments had nothing to do with the subject, that the question of the merits of the Yazoo claim might with just as much propriety have been discussed as the merits of the embargo, and, as he did not wish the question now taken, because he knew of some members out of their seats, who desired not to have it appear they were absent at the time, he would, though not in the habit of making that motion, now move for adjournment. In another point of view, I saw a great orator, statesman, scholar and man of genius, the first man in a great assembly of the representatives of a great and free people, whose sway has been extensive, and whose influence is still considerable; whose fame is spread far and wide, and sounded even beyond the Atlantic. These two

JOHN RANDOLPH

By unknown artist, taken from a picture owned by John Stewart Bryan, Esq., Richmond, Va.

impressions, though apparently inconsistent, were made from the sight of the same man. His vote, however, was negatived by a small majority."[1] (*a*)

James Madison was inaugurated President on March 4, 1809, after Randolph and his friends had vainly striven to bring about the nomination and election of James Monroe. Just when the movement to put Monroe forward as a candidate for the Presidency first got under way, is not clear. On April 7, 1808, in a speech in the House, Randolph stated that, when Madison told him that a sum of money would have to be paid by the United States to France, he was on perfectly amicable terms with him; indeed, terms as intimate as could well exist between persons so unequal in point of age and standing.[2] But the movement to make Monroe President certainly began as early as March, 1806; for, on March 24th, of that year, Timothy Pickering wrote to Rufus King that Nicholson, who was in sympathy with the movement, had lately pronounced Monroe in the House as second to no one in the United States; and, in the same letter, he indulged in some little speculation as to how Monroe's cabinet would be made up in case of his election.

"Should Monroe be our next President," he said, "Randolph, I presume, must be his Prime Minister and Nicholson Secretary of the Navy. Gallatin (whom Randolph lately eulogized) must remain Secretary of the Treasury; for they have no Southern man of ability and industry to fill his place."[3]

Whatever may have been the date of the actual beginning of the movement, from the time that Randolph broke with the Jefferson administration until Jefferson dismissed the subject of the Presidency from his correspondence and intercourse with Monroe, there was an

[1] *1896 Rep. of Amer. Hist. Assn.*, v. 1, 924.
[2] *A. of C.*, 1807–8, v. 2, 2032.
[3] *Life of Rufus King*, v. 4, 509.

eager rivalry between Randolph and Jefferson for the confidence of Monroe. Indeed, during a part of this time, Monroe might well have been cartooned with Randolph at one of his ears, practising on his vanity and kindling his jealousy of Madison and distrust of Jefferson, and, with Jefferson at his other ear, belittling Randolph's political influence and pleadingly asking, in the words of Burns' *Auld Lang Syne:*

> "Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
> And never brought to mind?"

The attention of the reader has already been called to the prompt steps taken by Jefferson to keep Monroe from being seduced by the secession of Randolph and his adherents. And these efforts were succeeded by more than one letter, in which he employed every available expedient for the purpose of smoothing out Monroe's ruffled feelings and wheedling him back into full coöperation and sympathy with Madison and himself. This was by no means an easy task. First, there was Monroe's dissatisfaction at having William Pinkney sent over to assist him in securing the objects of his English Mission to overcome; then there was the rude shock to Monroe of having the treaty negotiated by Pinkney and himself with England rejected by Jefferson without any reference of its provisions to the Senate at all; then there was the effect produced on Monroe's mind by the artful suggestions of his adherents that, though his prestige in Virginia was undiminished, Jefferson was scheming, and using the influence of his high office, to make Madison President, and that the intrigue to accomplish this purpose had not scrupled even to withhold Monroe's London dispatches from publicity after they had reached Washington, and to keep Monroe in England until it should be too late for him to return to the United States with any reasonable expectation of being able to compete successfully with Madison as a

Presidential candidate for the popular favor. But for generous affection, as well as tactful finesse, the conciliatory letters from Jefferson to Monroe have rarely been surpassed, and were altogether worthy of a man who never allowed his affection and respect for Monroe to deter him from running the risk of deeply wounding the latter's pride when public duty left him no other honorable alternative; but, who, though the most popular and powerful individual in the United States, was ready to go to almost any manly lengths to allay the suspicions and soothe the lacerated feelings of an old friend who was once told by him that he was one of those men who are born to serve the public (*a*), and of whom he frequently said that if his soul were turned inside out not a spot would be found on it.[1] What it cost Jefferson to write such letters, we can understand, when we recollect that Madison was his Secretary of State, and justly entitled, by reason of both his superior abilities and seniority, to precedence over Monroe as a Presidential candidate; and that his admiration and affection for Madison once led him to pay this remarkable tribute to him: "From three and thirty years trial, I can say conscientiously that I do not know in the world a man of purer integrity, more dispassionate, disinterested and devoted to genuine Republicanism; nor could I in the whole scope of America and Europe point out an abler head."[2] Under the circumstances, Jefferson might well have frankly espoused the cause of Madison, as a Presidential candidate, and there can be no doubt that Madison's election to the Presidency was consonant with his wishes; but he settled down to a state of neutrality, as between the two rivals, which seems to have been maintained inviolate to the end. He could not make both President, and he was unwilling actively to cast the weight of his influence into the scales against either. There is good cause to believe, however, that neither Madison, who

[1] *Life of Jefferson*, by Randall, v. 3, 255. [2] *Id.*, 30.

was by no means very popular in Virginia, nor Monroe, a dull man, of whom the most that can be said is that he was a man of firm and upright character and sound judgment, would ever have been President but for Jefferson's friendship for them. When Randolph was already grooming Monroe for the Presidential track, Jefferson wrote to the latter:

"The great body of your friends are among the firmest adherents to the administration; and, in their support of you, will suffer Mr. Randolph to have no communications with them. My former letter told you the line which both duty and inclination would lead me sacredly to pursue, but it is unfortunate for you to be embarrassed with such a *soi-disant* friend. You must not commit yourself to him. These views may assist you to understand such details as Mr. Pinkney will give you. If you are here at any time before the fall, it will be in time for any object you may have; and, by that time, the public sentiment will be more decisively declared. I wish you were here at present to take your choice of the two governments of Orleans and Louisiana; in either of which I could now place you; and I verily believe it would be to your advantage to be just that much withdrawn from the focus of the ensuing contest until its event should be known."[1]

The next year, Jefferson wrote to Monroe that the government of New Orleans was the second office in point of importance in the United States, and that he was still in hopes that Monroe would accept it.[2] A few months later, he warned Monroe against the efforts which the Federal papers were wickedly making to sow tares between Monroe and him, as if he were lending a hand to measures unfriendly to any views that their country might entertain respecting him.[3] But the most interesting letter in this series is one in which Jefferson used these words, so true to his faithful, loving nature:

[1] May 4, 1806, *Writings*, Mem. Ed., v. 11, 108.
[2] *Id.*, 170. [3] *Id.*, 211.

"I see with infinite grief a contest arising between yourself and another, who have been very dear to each other, and equally so to me. I sincerely pray that these dispositions may not be affected between you; with me, I confidently trust they will not; for independently of the dictates of public duty, which prescribes neutrality to me, my sincere friendship for you both will insure its sacred observance. I suffer no one to converse with me on the subject. I already perceive my old friend Clinton estranging himself from me. No doubt lies are carried to him, as they will be to the other two candidates under forms, which, however false, he can scarcely question. Yet I have been equally careful as to him also never to say a word on this subject. The object of the contest is a fair and honorable one, equally open to you all, and I have no doubt the personal conduct of all will be so chaste as to offer no ground of dissatisfaction with each other. But your friends will not be as delicate. I know too well from experience the progress of political controversy and the exacerbation of spirit, into which it degenerates, not to fear for the continuance of your mutual esteem. One piquing thing said draws on another, that a third, and always, with increasing acrimony, until all restraint is thrown off, and it becomes difficult for yourselves to keep clear of the toils in which your friends will endeavor to interlace you; and to avoid the participation in their passions which they will endeavor to produce. A candid recollection of what you know of each other will be the true corrective. With respect to myself, I hope they will spare me. My longings for retirement are so strong that I with difficulty encounter the daily drudgeries of my duty. But my wish for retirement itself is not stronger than that of carrying into it the affections of all my friends. I have ever viewed Mr. Madison and yourself as two principal pillars of my happiness. Were either to be withdrawn, I should consider it as among the greatest calamities which could assail my future peace of mind. I have great confidence that the candor and high understanding of both will guard me against this misfortune, the bare possibility of which has so far weighed on my mind that I could not be easy without unburdening it."[1]

[1] *Writings*, Mem. Ed., v. 11, 443.

To nothing is Carlyle's image of a pitcher, full of Egyptian vipers, each trying to raise its head above the other, more applicable than to the struggles of rival politicians; and fortunate, indeed, would it be if they could be oftener softened by such affectionate and healing words as these!

But Randolph did not permit Jefferson to sport all alone with Amaryllis in the shade. While Jefferson was warning Monroe against Randolph, the latter was breathing doubts respecting the good will and good faith of Jefferson and Madison into Monroe's mind. Nor did this course of conduct originate merely in the desire on Randolph's part to revenge himself on the leaders of the Republican majority and to rehabilitate his own political fortunes by alienating Monroe from them and making him President instead of Madison. There is every reason to believe that, almost from the very beginning of his political career, he had cherished a peculiarly strong respect for Monroe's character and capacity, which subsequently ripened into genuine affection when St. George Randolph, Randolph's deaf and dumb nephew, was placed by his uncle at school in England, and was the recipient of much kindness at the hands of Monroe and his family in that country. As early as the contest in the House over the first election of Jefferson to the Presidency, we find Randolph keeping Monroe apprised of the daily results of the balloting,[1] and expressing the highest esteem for Monroe's character, "public and private." Two years afterwards, he referred on the floor of the House to Monroe as "that able and eminent man, that faithful and illustrious public servant."[2] Some four years later, he wrote to Gallatin that he regretted exceedingly Jefferson's resolution to retire, and almost as much the premature announcement of that determination; but that, if he were sure that Monroe would succeed

[1] *Monroe Papers*, v. 9, Libr. Cong., Feb. 11, 1801.
[2] *A. of C.*, 1802–3, v. 2, 330.

him, his regret would be very much diminished.[1] By February, 1806, his hostility to Madison had become sufficiently urgent for him to write to his friend, Cæsar A. Rodney:

"If the man who has given the bias to our affairs from their true bearing and direction to Federalism or anything- or nothing-ism is elected to the Presidency (for which he is straining every nerve, supported by all the apostates of our party, the Feds and a few good but misguided men), we are gone forever."[2]

But, for more than a year before this letter was written, and when he was on cordial terms with all the members of Jefferson's administration, including Madison, Randolph had been on a footing of hearty friendship with Monroe. Speaking of his unhappy nephew, in a letter to Monroe, dated July 20, 1804, he said:

"I shall send him by the first vessel, which I approve, that sails for London, in full confidence that you will make the most advantageous disposition of him. If an eligible situation can be procured in England, I should much prefer his being under your immediate eye; but should his welfare, in your opinion, require it, you will send him to Paris. In short, my dear sir, to use your own words, you will do with him 'as if he were your own son.' To your protection we therefore commit him with that perfect reliance on your friendship, which almost allays the pain of parting with him."[3]

Shortly afterwards, St. George was sent over to England, and, from that time on, Randolph's letters to Monroe are replete with expressions of tender compassion for him and fervent gratitude to Monroe and his family for their kindness to him, which are enough in themselves to dispel the erroneous idea, only too common, that Randolph was a mere gall-sac.

[1] *J. R.*, by Adams, 161. [2] Feb. 28, Libr. Cong.
[3] *Monroe Ps.*, v. 10, Libr. Cong.

We have made a point of bringing out clearly the high respect and friendly regard in which Randolph held Monroe, before he broke with the Jefferson administration and began to shout Yazoo! at Madison, and the debt of personal gratitude, which he owed to him, because otherwise, perhaps, inferences unfavorable to his sincerity might be drawn from the rather stilted and fulsome language, in which, at times, in his subsequent letters to Monroe, he expressed his admiration and friendship for him, and considerable color be given to the claim that, in instigating Monroe to become a candidate for the Presidency, he was simply using him as a tool for his own selfish purposes. The *Tertium Quids*, as he and the old Republicans like him who dropped away from Jefferson and his Democratic majority came to be known, included such distinguished Virginia Republicans as John Taylor of Caroline and Littleton Waller Tazewell, as well as himself, and Monroe was their choice too for the Presidency, to say nothing of leading Republicans in other States. The supporters of Monroe for the Presidency, as one of the letters from Jefferson to him cited above reveals, were by no means limited to the adherents or friends of Randolph. Monroe had been a Revolutionary soldier, a member of Congress, a governor of Virginia and a foreign minister, and enjoyed an excellent reputation for firmness and probity of character, public spirit and good judgment. Moreover, he was reputed and professed to be in sympathy with the orthodox Republican principles of which Randolph was so tenacious. He was as acceptable, as a candidate, to Randolph's intimate friends, Macon, Nicholson, Clay and Bryan, as to Randolph himself, and was, besides, as we have seen, a personal friend of Randolph and a benefactor of his nephew. Under these circumstances, it was entirely natural that, when Randolph quarreled with Jefferson, and made up his mind to combat the election of Madison to the Presidency, his selection for the office should have been

Monroe, and that enthusiasm for his candidate, who, it should likewise be recalled, was much older than himself, should have occasionally assumed the form of somewhat tumid praise and deference.

On March 20, 1806, he wrote to Monroe, who was then in London, endeavoring to negotiate a treaty between the United States and Great Britain, as follows:

"Your dispatches of the 14 and 25 of October arrived by the same vessel which brought my letter; that is, between the 15 and 20 of December. So far from pursuing the course which you recommended, and which would have been readily adopted by the H. of R. (who no sooner heard than they were penetrated with the wisdom of your advice), not only the contents, but even the very existence of that correspondence was sedulously concealed from the knowledge of everyone, even from Cabinet Ministers themselves, until we had been reluctantly drawn by the exercise of undue influence into the late disgraceful measures; and, the day after our final decision (Jan. 17), the dispatches which had been four weeks in the S. [Secretary] of State's office were laid before us; accompanied with circumstances of paltry finesse and bungling duplicity in order to make us believe that they had just arrived. It pains me to present you this mortifying and afflicting picture of human infirmity, but, if the canvass were large enough, I could extend it much farther. There is no longer a doubt but the principles of our administration have been materially changed. The compass of a letter (indeed a volume would be too small) cannot suffice to give you even an outline. Suffice it to say, that everything is made a business of bargaining and traffick, the ultimate object of which is to raise Mr. M—n to the Presidency. To this the Old Republican party will never consent, nor can N. Y. be brought into the measure. Between them and the supporters of Mr. M. there is an open rupture. Need I tell you that they (the Old Republicans) are united in your support? That they look to you, Sir, for the example which this nation has yet to receive to demonstrate that the Government can be conducted on open, upright principles

without intrigue or any species of disingenuous artifice. We are extremely rejoiced to hear that you are about to return to the U. S. Much as I am personally interested (through St. George) in your stay in Europe, I would not have you remain one day longer. Your country requires, nay, demands, your presence. It is time that a character, which has proved invulnerable to every open attack, should triumph over insidious enmity."[1]

The next letter from Randolph to Monroe was written the day after the adjournment of the House on April 21, 1806; under circumstances which he pronounced in this same letter to have been the most extraordinary that he had ever witnessed:

"A decided division," he said, "has taken place in the Republican party, which has been followed by a proscription of the Anti-Ministerialists. Among the number of the proscribed are Mr. Nicholson, who has retired in strong disgust, the Speaker, who will soon follow him, from a like sentiment, and many others of minor consequence, such as the writer of this letter *cum multis aliis*. My object at present is merely to guard you, which your known prudence perhaps renders an unnecessary caution, against a compromitment of yourself to men in whom you cannot *wholly* confide. Be assured that the aspect of affairs here and the avowed character of those who conduct them have undergone a material change since you left America. In a little while, I hope you will be on the spot to judge for yourself—to see with your own eyes and to hear with your own ears."[2]

Appended to the letter, was this intense postscript: "I have read with deep attention your last confidential communication and thank you for it from my soul: the contents (it is superfluous I hope to say) have not been and shall not be communicated to any human being."

In a third letter to Monroe, dated July 3, 1806, after giving as one of his reasons for not writing very frequently,

[1] *Monroe Ps.*, v. 11, Libr. Cong. [2] *Ibid.*

"perhaps too often," the fact that the fear that his letters might fall into improper hands restricted him to mere common-place topics, he says:

"My letter by Mr. Skipwith has, I have no doubt, reached you in safety, and I hope put you upon your guard against men who, whatever be their merits in other respects, have towards yourself acted, and *are now acting* an insidious and unworthy part. Be assured that all your prudence and caution, conspicuous as those qualities are in you, will be required to elude their machinations. There is a system, of which you are not informed, but in which nevertheless every effort will be made, and indeed is making, to induce you to play a part, so as to give a stage effect that may suit a present purpose. I wish it were in my power to be more explicit. Be assured, however, that you have friends whose attachment to you is not to be shaken, and from whose zeal you have at the same time nothing to fear. I need not tell you, I hope, that your communications to me have been inviolably preserved, and that the fervor of my attachment has never betrayed me into a use of your name on any occasion, except where your public dispatches laid by Govt before Congress called for and justified the measure. I am led to make this declaration from perceiving a spirit in certain persons to attribute much of my public conduct to a secret influence exerted by you; than which as you well know nothing can be more false. In Virginia, you will find no change of opinion respecting yourself. There have been schisms and divisions amongst us which do us very little honor, but, in regard to yourself, there is but one sentiment—at least amongst the mass of the people. I look forward with pride and pleasure to your return to us after having placed the great commercial interests of our country upon a solid and honorable basis."[1]

In his next letter to Monroe, the fervor of the attachment, which Randolph avows in this letter, becomes still more animated, but is by no means too impetuous and unreflecting to beget some artful sentences. He

[1] *Monroe Ps.*, v. 11, Libr. Cong.

first acknowledges the receipt of a letter from Monroe, and then breaks out into this extraordinary panegyric:

"If heretofore I had been at a loss to fix upon the individual, the most disinterested and virtuous, whom I have known, I could *now* find no difficulty in determining; nor do I hesitate to declare that the very arguments which you adduce to dissuade your friends from supporting you at the next Presidential election form *with me* an invincible motive for persisting in that support; since they exhibit the most irrefragable proof of that superior merit which you alone are unwilling to acknowledge."[1]

This was certainly, to use a Virginia expression, laying it on with a trowel. Then the letter proceeds more soberly:

"Yet I must confess there are considerations amongst those presented by you that would have great, and perhaps decisive, influence upon my mind, were the pretensions of the candidates more nearly equal. But, in this case, there is not only a strong preference for the one party but a decided objection to the other. It is not a singular belief among the Republicans that to the great and acknowledged influence of this last gentleman we are indebted for that strange amalgamation of men and principles which has distinguished some of the late acts of the administration and proved so injurious to it. Many of the most consistent and influential of the Old Republicans, by whose exertions the present men were brought into power, have beheld with immeasurable disgust the principles, for which they had contended, and (as they thought) established, neutralized at the touch of a cold and insidious moderation. I speak not of the herd of place-hunters whose sole view in aiding to produce a change in the administration was the advancement of themselves and their connexions, but of those disinterested and generous spirits who served from attachment to the cause alone and who neither expect nor desire preferment. Such men, of whom I could give you a list, that would go near to fill my paper, ascribe to the baneful counsels of the S. of S. [Madison] that we have been gradually relaxing from

[1] *Monroe Ps.*, v. 11, Libr. Cong.

our old principles and relapsing into the system of our predecessors; that Government stands aloof from its tried friends, whilst it hugs to its bosom men of the most equivocal character, and even some who have been and still are unequivocally hostile to that cause which our present rulers stand pledged to support; and that you are at this moment associated with a colleague whom former administrations deemed a fit instrument to execute the ever memorable Treaty of London! They are moreover determined not to have a Yazoo President if they can avoid it; nor one who has mixed in the intrigues of the last three or four years at Washington. There is another consideration which I know not how to touch. You, my dear Sir, cannot be ignorant, although of all mankind you, perhaps, have the least cause to know it, how deeply the respectability of any character may be impaired by an unfortunate matrimonial connexion. I can pursue this subject no further. It is at once too delicate and too mortifying. Before the decision is ultimately made, I hope to have the pleasure of communicating fully with you in person. With you I believe the principles of our government to be in danger and union and activity on the part of its friends indispensable to its existence, but that union can never be obtained under the Presidency of Mr. M. The strongest recommendation which he could bring to my support is the possession of your confidence. But, when I reflect that for nearly four years you have been employed on a remote theatre, whilst the transactions of that period, upon which my judgment has been formed, passed under my immediate eye, even that recommendation loses much of its force."

The letter later gives the assurance that Monroe's communications were held under the most guarded seal of confidence and that the writer's most intimate friends had no cause to believe that the correspondence between him and Monroe related to anything except to Randolph's poor unfortunate boy who had found (the letter said) another father in Monroe.[1]

[1] Sept. 16, 1806, *Monroe Ps.*, v. 2, Libr. Cong.

Just why Randolph should have thought the union between Madison and Dolly Madison, his celebrated wife, an unfortunate matrimonial connexion, he does not tell us; but this letter supplies us with a timely occasion for mentioning the fact that six months earlier John Quincy Adams had entered in his diary the fact that he had just been told by James A. Bayard that, in a conversation, which he had had with Mrs. Madison, the evening before, about the Presidency, she had spoken very slightingly of Monroe.[1] In a letter to Monroe, dated Jan. 2, 1807, Randolph says:

"Will you pardon my again cautioning you *how* and *to whom* you write. I hardly know how to justify my presumption but the state of the times must plead my excuse. Men and things have undergone great mutations since your departure from the United States. The most rancorous animosity, personal and political, is now found to exist between persons and parties each claiming to be Republican."[2]

A reference in the same letter to St. George leads Randolph to add: "The name of this dear unfortunate boy gives new force to the sense of my obligations to you. But Heaven and your own heart will repay you although I never can."

No circumstance, he assured Monroe in another letter, afforded him so high a gratification as he received from his letters.[3] Still another letter to Monroe, dated May 30, 1807, and written from Richmond, during the Burr trial, discloses the fact that Randolph was then pretty despondent about the outlook for his friend in Virginia; though there had been a time when he thought that the State was safe for him.

"The friends of Mr. M——n," he said, "have left nothing undone to impair the very high and just confidence of the

[1] *Memoirs*, v. 1, 420, Mar. 13, 1806. [2] *Monroe Ps.*, v. 11, Libr. Cong.
[3] *Id.*, v. 12, Apr. 17, 1807, Libr. Cong.

nation in yourself. Nothing but the *possession of the government* could have enabled them to succeed however partially in this attempt. In Virginia, they have met with the most determined resistance; and, although I believe the Executive influence will at last carry the point, for which it has been unremittingly exerted, of procuring the nomination of electors, favorable to the S. of S., yet it is not even in its power to shake the confidence of the people of this State in your principles and abilities, or to efface your public services from their recollection. I should be wanting in my duty to you, my dear Sir, were I not to apprize you that exertions to diminish the value of your character and public services have been made by *persons and in a manner* that will be scarcely credible to you, altho, at the same time unquestionably true. Our friend, Col. Mercer, should you land in a Northern port, can give you some correct and valuable information on this and other subjects. Meanwhile, the Republicans of New York, sore with the coalition effected by Mr. Jno. Nicholas between his party and the Federalists (now entirely discomfited), and *knowing the auspices, under which he acted*, are irreconcilably opposed to Mr. M., and striving to bring forward Mr. Clinton, the V. P. Much consequently depends on the part which Pennsylvania will take in this transaction. There is a leaning evidently towards the N. Y. candidate. Whether the Executive influence will be able to overcome this predisposition yet remains to be seen. In the person of any other man than Mr. M. I have no doubt it would succeed. But the Republicans of Pennsylvania, setting all other considerations aside, are indignant at the recollection that in all their struggles with the combined parties of McKean, etc., and the Federalists the hand of Government has been felt against *them*, and, so far as it has been exerted, they *choose* to ascribe to the exertions of Mr. M. Such is as nearly as I can collect the posture of affairs at *present*. Wilson C. N. [Wilson Cary Nicholas] and Duane are both in town at this time. Some important result is no doubt to flow from this conjunction. When you return, you will hardly know the country. A system of espionage and denunciation has been organized which pervades every quarter; distrust and suspicion generally prevail in the intercourse

between man and man. All is constraint, reserve and mystery. Intrigue has arrived at a pitch which I hardly supposed it would have reached in five centuries. The *man* of all others, whom I supposed would be the *last* suspected by *you*, is the nucleus of this system. The maxim of Rochefoucault is in *him* completely verified, 'that an affectation of simplicity is the refinement of imposture.' Hypocrisy and treachery have reached their acme amongst us. I hope that I shall see you very soon after your arrival. I can then give you a full explanation of these general expressions and *proof* that they have been made upon the surest grounds. Amongst your unshaken friends, you may reckon two of our Chancellors, Mr. Nicholson, of Maryland, Mr. Clay, of Philadelphia, Col. John Taylor, and Mr. Macon."[1]

This letter ends with an assurance of "the most unalterable esteem and affection."

By Dec. 24, 1807, Monroe was again in the United States, and, on that day, Randolph wrote a letter to him which proves that he thought it best for Monroe's Presidential prospects that the *liaison* between the two should not be brought to the public attention.

"In abstaining so long from a personal interview with you," he said, "I leave you to judge what violence I have committed upon my private feelings. Before your arrival, however, I had determined on the course which I ought to pursue, and had resolved that no personal gratification should induce me to hazard your future advancement and, with it, the good of my country by any attempt to blend the fate of a proscribed individual with the high destiny which, I trust, awaits you. It is nevertheless of the first consequence to us both that I should have a speedy opportunity of communing fully with you. This perhaps can be best perfected at my own lodging where we shall not be exposed to observation or liable to interruption."[2]

[1] *Monroe Ps.*, v. 12, Libr. Cong.
[2] *Ibid.*

In the succeeding March, Randolph returns to the same subject. After speaking of "the attachment," which he felt for Monroe, independent of "the esteem and reverence," which he had long borne towards him, he said:

"Among the events of my public life, and especially those which have grown out of the two last years, no circumstance has inspired such keen regret as that which has begotten the necessity of the reserve between us to which you allude. Not that I have been insensible to the cogent motives to such a demeanor on both sides. Far from it. I must have been blind not to have perceived them. They suggested themselves at a very early period to my mind, and my conduct was accordingly regulated by them. But there are occasions in life, and this (with me) was one of them, in which necessity serves but to embitter, instead of resigning our feelings to her rigid dispensations. I leave you then to judge with what avidity I shall seize the opportunity of renewing our intercourse when the causes which have given birth to its suspension shall have ceased to exist; since amongst the enjoyments, which life has afforded me, there are few, very few, which I value in comparison with the possession of your friendship. In a little while, I shall quit the political theatre, probably forever, and I shall carry with me into retirement none of the surprise and not much of the regret excited by the blasting effects of ministerial artifice and power upon my public character, should I find (as I fear I shall) that they have been enabled to reach even your own."[1]

A higher proof, however, of Randolph's esteem and reverence for Monroe than his abstinence from unreserved intercourse with him was the favorable estimate which he places in this letter upon the hapless treaty negotiated by Monroe and Pinkney in England and summarily suppressed by Jefferson. In a previous letter, he had designedly passed his hand over a very raw and sensitive surface when he wrote to Monroe in these words: "I

[1] March 26, 1808, *Monroe Ps.*, v. 12, Libr. Cong.

never had a doubt that clamour would be raised against the treaty, be it what it might. My reasons for this opinion I will give when we meet. They are *particular* as well as general. Prepare yourself to be surprised at some things which you will hear."[1] Now he wrote to Monroe that he was convinced that the treaty was not merely the best that could be obtained, after the opportunity of concluding one with Mr. Fox had been lost by the delay of the extraordinary mission, but that in itself it was highly beneficial to the United States; and Randolph then quite justly condemns the conduct of the Jefferson administration for insisting that our demands for reparation, on account of the attack on the *Chesapeake* should not be separated from our other demands for redress upon Great Britain; "thus shutting with its own hands the door to any honorable reparation of that unprecedented outrage."[2]

The idea that Randolph was moved wholly by personal motives in screwing Monroe up to the point of aspiring to the Presidency is also negatived by his attitude towards the latter after it had become plain that Madison was as good as elected. For instance, the letter to Monroe just cited by us, in which Randolph spoke of the esteem and reverence that he had long felt for him, was written after a Congressional caucus at Washington and Legislative caucuses at Richmond had clearly shown that his friend had gone hopelessly lame in the Presidential race. On Jan. 21, 1808, the respective friends of Madison and Monroe in the Virginia Legislature had separately assembled; Madison's at the Bell Tavern, and Monroe's at the Capitol, in Richmond, and the preponderance of numbers in favor of Madison was so overwhelming as to leave no reasonable doubt as to what the sentiment of Virginia was; and, without the favorable suffrage of his own State, Monroe, of course, could not expect to make any headway

[1] Mar. 24, 1807, *Monroe Ps.*, v. 11, Libr. Cong.
[2] Mar. 26, 1808; *Monroe Ps.*, v. 12, Libr. Cong.

beyond its limits. All the 134 persons, who attended the Madison caucus, cast their ballots for Madison; of the 60 persons who attended the other caucus, 50 cast their ballots for Monroe and 10 for Madison. Two days afterwards, the Congressional caucus was held, and, of the 89 votes cast at it, 83 were cast in favor of Madison; the remaining six being divided equally between Monroe and George Clinton.[1] But what more decisive disproof could there be of the idea that Monroe was a mere tool, employed by Randolph for his own selfish purposes, than these generous words which Randolph wrote to Monroe after the actual election of Madison?

"I wish that it was in my power to offer you an overflowing purse, but, like most planters, mine is not very well replenished. If, however, in any mode my name can be of service to you; or, if I can in any way demonstrate my sense of your goodness to me and mine, I pray you to command me without reserve. Perhaps an apology may be due for this freedom but I will not make any."[2]

As addiction to public life kept Monroe almost always impecunious, Randolph's offer to pledge his credit for his benefit was by no means a mere Castilian flourish. A week later, Randolph adds this postscript to another letter to Monroe: "Every expression of respect (and affection, if she and you will pardon the liberty) to Mrs. Monroe."[3]

Our next letter from Randolph to Monroe is dated about a year and a half later than this one. Monroe was then living in Albemarle County, Va., and Randolph writes to him that he expects to avail himself of his kind invitation, and proposes to come over from Buckingham Court to see him, and that Randolph's nephew [Tudor Randolph] would probably accompany him.[4] (*a*) [4] And

[1] *Jefferson*, by Tucker, v. 2, 287 (note).
[2] Jan. 1, 1809, *Monroe Ps.*, v. 12, Libr. Cong.
[3] Jan. 7, 1809, *Monroe Ps.*, v. 12, Libr. Cong.
[4] Aug. 28, 1810, *Monroe Ps.*, v. 12, Libr. Cong.

then appears on the face of the letter this ominous speck: "We have various political reports here; some of them connected with yourself, to which I have paid no attention." A few months later, and the speck had become a threatening cloud, and had overspread the entire relationship between the two men. Monroe had been a candidate for a seat in the Virginia Legislature, had given the requisite assurances of fealty to the majority faction in the Republican party, had been elected, and was on the way for a second time to the Governorship of Virginia, which was then filled by the Legislature. A little later, a thoroughly expurgated Old Republican, he was to become Madison's Secretary of State, and his successor in the Presidency, and the upholder of policies, as remote from the Old Republican creed as the Arctic circle is from the Antarctic.

"The habits of intimacy," Randolph wrote to him, "which have existed between us, make it, as I conceive, my duty to inform you that reports are industriously circulated in this City to your disadvantage. They are to this effect—that, in order to promote your election to the Chief Magistracy of the Commonwealth, you have descended to unbecoming compliances with the members of the Assembly, not excepting your bitterest personal enemies; that you have volunteered explanations to them of the differences heretofore subsisting between yourself and administration which amount to a dereliction of the ground which you took after your return from England, and even of your warmest personal friends. Upon this, altho it is unnecessary for me to pass a comment, yet it would be disingenuous to conceal that it has created unpleasant sensations not in me only but in others, whom I know, you justly ranked as among those most strongly attached to you. I wished for an opportunity of mentioning this subject to you, but none offered itself, and I would not seek one; because, when I cannot afford assistance to my friends, I will never consent to become an incumbrance on them. I write in haste and, therefore, abruptly. I keep no copy, and have only to enjoin

on you that this communication is in the strictest sense of the term *confidential* —solely for your own eye."[1]

As soon as this letter was received by Monroe, he dispatched his son-in-law, George Hay, post-haste to Randolph, but with no result except to elicit this second letter from Randolph:

"Mr. Hay has just been here. His object was to ascertain the state of my feelings and opinions on the subject of my letter of the last night and yours of this morning. This I did not find myself disposed to communicate to him or to any person but yourself: I mean to any person through whom it was to be made known to you; since there are those from whom I should not feel justifiable in withholding it. When Mr. Hay called, I had barely finished reading your two letters to Col. John Taylor, and my situation not permitting me to delay my departure, I had determined to reserve for a future communication the expression of my opinion (should you require it) on this truly delicate and important subject. Be assured that I can never be rendered by any circumstance whatsoever less sensible of my personal obligations to you (thro. my nephew) than I have uniformly demonstrated myself to be; that I shall ever rejoice to hear of your personal prosperity and to promote it should it ever be in my power so to do."[2]

This letter was followed by a splutter of defensive or explanatory letters from Monroe. If Randolph had been a mere self-seeking politician, or a mere changeful chameleon, he might well have kept his feelings to himself and trusted to the intercession of Monroe to bring him back into party favor, as the intercession of Jefferson had doubtless brought Monroe himself. (*a*) But such a course was as utterly repugnant to his proud, independent spirit and to his incorruptible fidelity to his political creed as a state of mean-spirited dependence was to his kinsman, Kidder

[1] Jan. 14, 1811, *Monroe Ps.*, v. 12, Libr. Cong.
[2] Jan. 15, 1811, *Monroe Ps.*, v. 12, Libr. Cong.

Randolph, who once declared, when speaking of a newly married man, who had billeted his wife and himself upon his friends, whilst his own house was under construction, that he would rather live in a tobacco hogshead with an outside chimney to it than as that man did.[1]

"I have purposely delayed answering your letters," Randolph said, "because you seem to have taken up the idea that I laboured under some excitement (of an angry nature it is to be presumed from the expressions, employed in your communication to Col. Taylor, as well as in that to myself), and I was desirous that my reply should in appearance as well as in fact proceed from the calmest and most deliberate exercise of my judgment. How my letters in Richmond could excite an unpleasant feeling in your bosom *towards me*, I am wholly at a loss to comprehend. Let me beg you to review them, to reflect for a moment on the circumstances of the case, and then ask yourself whether I could or ought to have done otherwise, than as I did in apprizing you of the reports, injurious to your honour, that were in the mouth of every man of every description in Richmond. I certainly held no intercourse with those who were hostile to your election, but it surely required no power of inspiration to divine that, when such language was held by your own supporters, those to whom you were peculiarly obnoxious would hardly omit to make a handle of it to injure you. You may well feel assured that no man would venture to approach *me* with observations *directly* derogating from your character. Those who spoke to me on the subject generally mentioned it as a source of real regret and sorrow. A few sounded to see how far they might go and, receiving no encouragement, drew off. But it was impossible for me to shut my ears or eyes to the passing scene, and, in my hearing, the most injurious statements were made with which, as well as with the general impression of all with whom I conversed in relation to them, I deemed it my duty to acquaint you. *Mutatis mutandis*, I should have expected a similar act of friendship on your part.

[1] J. R.'s Diary.

"Ask yourself again, my dear Sir, whether your cautious avoidance and that of everyone near you of every sort of communication with me and of every mark of accustom'd respect and friendship was not in itself a change in the relation between us which nothing on my part could have given the least occasion for, and whether *I* was not authorized to infer as *well* as the *public;* in short whether it was not intended that the public *should* infer not only that all political connexion but that all communication was at an end between us?

"Under these circumstances, is it *my* conduct or *your* own that is likely to put a stop to our old intercourse, and is it *you* or *I* that have a right to complain of the abandonment of the old ground of relation that existed between us? Let me add that a passage in your letter to Col. T. (I mean that which was in circulation at Richmond) respecting the *motives* of the *minority* (with whom you had just disavowed all political connexion whatever) has been deemed by many of the most intelligent among them as a just cause of complaint; as furnishing to their persecutors a colourable pretext for renewing and persevering in the most unpopular and odious of all the charges that have been brought against them. We cannot doubt the sincerity of your impression but know it to be erroneous and feel it to be injurious to us. And now let me declare to you, which I do with the utmost sincerity of heart, that, during the period, to which you refer, I never felt one angry emotion towards you. Concern for your honour and character was uppermost in my thoughts. A determination to adhere to the course of conduct, which my own sense of propriety and of duty to myself pointed out, had almost dwindled into a secondary consideration.

"Accept my earnest wishes for your prosperity and happiness. I have long since abandoned all thoughts of politics except so far as is *strictly* necessary to the execution of my legislative duty. Again I offer you my best wishes."[1]

Monroe next emerges in the life of Randolph in this entry which the latter made a few days later in his Diary

[1] Mar. 2, 1811, *Monroe Ps.*, v. 12, Libr. Cong.

under the date of Mar. 16, 1811: "Hay calls and requests me to see M., who wants to talk on private business. I go to the —— house. Long Interview." (*a*) With this interview, all truly friendly intercourse between the two men appears to have ended forever, though, under the date of Dec. 20, 1821, the *Memoirs* of John Quincy Adams contain this entry:

"He [President Monroe] gave me a particular account of the relations heretofore between him and John Randolph and of the negotiation the spring before last by which the reconciliation between them was so far effected that he invited Randolph to dine with him, and he went."[1]

In the meantime, we do not lack evidence as to the full effect left upon the mind of Randolph by the return of Monroe to the comfortable precincts of party orthodoxy. Under date of Jan. 12, 1811, he made this entry in his Diary: "Richmond, Monroe, Traitor," and, in another entry, relating to the visit that he paid to Monroe's home in Albermarle County in 1810, after the words: "To Mr. Monroe's," is inserted in a different ink, and evidently at a later date than the original entry, the damning word: "Judas." (*b*) In the Diary also, is this memorandum, so true to the pettier side of human malevolence: "*M-n-r-e* said to Jno. Mercer and Gen. Minor in the upper parlour of the Edlumvian Inn, Fredericksburg, that Mr. Jefferson was as great a hypocrite as any in the U. S. except Tim: Pickering." Referring to the part that Randolph took in relation to the Presidency in 1808, Henry Adams assigns his course solely to the desire for revenge. "Monroe," he says, "was one tool and Clinton another; both equally used by Randolph not to forward his own views of public good but to pull down Mr. Madison"; and he calls attention to the fact that, while Randolph was writing to Nicholson of Monroe, "Our friend gains ground very fast

[1] Vol. 5, 456.

at home," he mentioned in the same letter the belief of his friend Clay that Pennsylvania, "Duane *non obstante*," would be decidedly for Clinton, and added: "If the V. P.'s interest should be best, our electors (in case we succeed) will not hazard everything by a division."[1] Adams also recalls another somewhat later letter, in which Randolph urged Nicholson to go to the Eastern Shore of Maryland in the interest of George Clinton and do everything in his power "to promote the cause."[2] If these letters show anything, they show that Randolph was not so much interested in individual candidates for the Presidency as "in the cause"; or in other words his own view of the public good; and that, in his opinion, the best way to promote that was to back Monroe and Clinton respectively in the States where each had the best chance of making real headway, and finally to stake "the cause" on the one of the two who had the most electors to his credit. The only person that could object to this program, it seems to us, was one who did not have "the cause" so much at heart as himself; and to anyone, who is familiar with the intense convictions entertained by such Old Republicans as Randolph, John Taylor of Caroline, and Littleton Waller Tazewell, in regard to the political issues of the time, the claim that "the cause," which Randolph had in mind, was a mere project of personal revenge hardly deserves consideration. In every respect, in our opinion, the relations, which Randolph bore to Monroe, until the rupture between them, were honorable to both his mind and heart, and, if open to criticism at all, only on the score that Randolph took too vindictive a view of an ordinary case of political tergiversation, accelerated by inveterate partiality for public life and pecuniary dependence on it. (*a*) It is true that there seems to be something quite overstrained about the compliments with which he at

[1] *J. R.*, 232, 233.
[2] *Id.*, 234.

times plied Monroe in his letters; as if his vision had been beguiled by the herb, the juice of which,

> "On sleeping eyelids laid,
> Will make or man or woman madly dote
> Upon the next live creature that it sees."

But it is noticeable that the same hyperbole marks Randolph's allusions to Monroe in his letters to other persons. For instance, in a letter to Nicholson, he said:

> "Perhaps you never saw human nature in so degraded a situation as in the person of W. [Wilkinson] before the G. J. [Grand Jury], and yet this man stands on the very summit and pinnacle of executive favor, whilst James M—e is denounced! As for such men as the quids! you speak of, I should hardly think his majesty would stoop to such humble quarry when J. M—e was in view."[1]

The action of the Congressional caucus in nominating Madison for the Presidency was repudiated by the friends of Monroe and George Clinton. A formal protest, signed by 17 members of Congress, the most conspicuous of whom were John Randolph, Samuel Smith, of Maryland, David R. Williams, of South Carolina, James M. Garnett, of Virginia, Joseph Clay, of Pennsylvania, and Gurdon S. Mumford and George Clinton, Jr., of New York, was published. It denied the regularity of the recent caucus, presented reasons why no preceding Presidential caucus should be accepted as creating a binding precedent for such an assemblage, and condemned all such caucuses on principle as contrary to the Republican creed; indeed as operating a virtual transfer of the election of President from the people to a handful of political managers. A danger of more than ordinary magnitude too, the protesters thought, was to be found in the facility with which the influence of the President might be exerted over any meeting of individuals

[1] June 25, 1807, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

held at the seat of the National Government. And James Madison himself was denounced to the world in the paper with a degree of abusive license which reminds us of the famous saying of Thomas B. Reed, of Maine, provoked by the marvelous transfigurations that our public men undergo when rendered by death no longer objects of rivalry or jealousy, that a statesman is a dead politician. "We are perhaps on the eve of a war with one of the great powers of Europe," the protesters declared,

"We are therefore strongly impressed with the difficulties of our situation. In such a crisis, if unanimity in the choice of President is necessary, that choice should be directed to a man eminently calculated by his tried energy and talents to conduct the nation with firmness and wisdom through the perils which surround it; to a man who had not in the hour of terror and persecution deserted his post and sought in obscurity and retirement a shelter from the political tempest; to a man not suspected of undue partiality to either of the present belligerent powers; to a man who had not forfeited his claim to public confidence by recommending a shameful bargain with the unprincipled speculators of the Yazoo companies; a dishonorable compact with fraud and corruption. Is James Madison such a man? We ask for energy, and we are told of his moderation; we ask for talents, and the reply is his unassuming merit; we ask what were his services in the cause of public liberty, and we are directed to the pages of the *Federalist*, written in conjunction with Alexander Hamilton and John Jay, in which the most extravagant of their doctrines are maintained and propagated. We ask for consistency as a Republican standing forth to stem the torrent of oppression, which once threatened to overwhelm the liberties of the country; we ask for that high and honorable sense of duty, which would at all times turn with loathing and abhorrence from any compromise with fraud and speculation; we ask in vain."[1]

When the Presidential election took place in November, 1808, one set of electors was presented to the voters of

[1] *Nat'l Intelligencer*, Mar. 7, 1808.

Virginia in the interest of Madison and another in the interest of Monroe. Outside of Virginia, Monroe seems to have had but little popular support. Nicholson wrote to him that his return from England was anxiously wished for by many who were desirous of putting him in nomination for the Presidency, but that his own expectations on the subject were not over-sanguine,[1] and nothing ever occurred to give a brighter tinge to these expectations. The Republicans, beyond the limits of Virginia, had become restive under the Virginia supremacy; and there was to be a time when even John Randolph was to express the hope that he had seen the last of the Virginia Presidents, because they had done mischief enough.[2] In Virginia, however, at this time, Monroe had a real party in Randolph and his friends. Randolph, it is true, no longer had the political standing in that State which he had had before he broke with the Jefferson administration. Then he was, to use a hackneyed expression, "the coming man," and there was no bow of promise in the opinion of his Virginia admirers too radiant to span his future. Even the miscarriage of the Chase trial had not sensibly diminished his prestige in Virginia. In reading the newspaper comments in that State on his refusal at different stages of his early career to surrender his individul discretion to the direction of his party superiors, an indulgent disposition to refer his conduct to nothing worse than excessive scrupulosity is quite noticeable; and, even when Randolph had finally turned his back upon the Jefferson administration, his prestige in Virginia, whatever may have been the case elsewhere, was still too great for any Virginian to dismiss his defiance as a mere *brutum fulmen*. To the Virginians it signified a real schism; one that might have been the precursor of a general *bouleversement*, if the leader whose supremacy was challenged by Randolph had not been the

[1] Apr. 12, 1807; *J. R.*, by Adams, 218.

[2] Letter to L. W. Tazewell, Feb. 21, 1826. L. W. Tazewell, Jr., MSS.

omnipotent Zeus that he was. More than once before Madison received the vote of Virginia for the Presidency, was the influence of Randolph over the minds of its people unmistakably demonstrated. Not for a considerable time, after he had hurled his fierce *vale* at the Jefferson administration, could Thomas Ritchie, the editor of *The Richmond Enquirer* and one of the most powerful retainers of that administration, make up his mind to lay aside the tone of cautious reticence which had previously run through all his observations upon Randolph's political insurgency. During the latter part of December, 1806, and the middle of January, 1807, various propositions came up in the Virginia Legislature which put the popularity of the foreign policy of the administration to the test, and it is impossible to note the fate of these propositions without being struck with the conclusive testimony that they bear, in some instances, to the extraordinary standing which Randolph was able to mantain in Virginia in spite of the fact that at the last Presidential election even the obdurate heart of New England had melted like soft wax under Jefferson's blandishments.[1] For instance, as late as Jan. 13, 1807, a proposition to approve the policy of the administration was approved by a vote of only 102 to 63 in the House of Delegates; and two days later the same proposition was rejected in the Virginia Senate by a vote of 15 to 5. With the latter part of 1807, began in *The Richmond Enquirer* an interchange of paper missiles between the adherents of Madison and Monroe to which a reader can turn even now with the expectation of some pleasure and instruction, and, when he does, it will not take him long to see that Randolph, rather than Monroe, was the yeast in the ferment. And this time the pseudonyms of the writers were not borrowed simply from the "gliding ghosts" of ancient Rome, but also from Grecian and aboriginal sources besides. "Phocion," one of

[1] *Richm. Enq.*, Jan. 13, 15, 1807.

Randolph's enemies, and "Anti-Phocion," one of his defenders, in four papers each kept up a kind of antiphonal duel with each other.[1] "Pericles," "Publicola," and "Harmodius" covered "Phocion" with their shields.[2] "Plain Observer," "American," and just-minded "Aristides" engaged on the same side.[3] On Aug. 5, 1808, "Tell" addressed to the freeholders of Randolph's Congressional district an appeal asking them to reject him at the next election; and, on Nov. 18, 1808, Thomas Ritchie himself, one of the truly great editors of our national history, gave his reasons why Randolph should not be re-elected. Among the writers, who came to the aid of "Anti-Phocion," were A. B., supposed to be George Hay, "Powhatan," supposed to be Benjamin Watkins Leigh or William Leigh, "Scourge," and "Opechancanough," supposed to be the same person as "Powhatan."[4] "Protester," who answered "One of the People," who was thought to be William Wirt, was thought to be Randolph himself, but was not (*a*). But the best, perhaps, of all the fagots, that fed the fire of the Madison-Monroe contest in Virginia, were these clever lines on John Randolph:

"Thou art a pretty little speaker John,
Though some there are who think you've spoke too long,
And even call, sweet Sir, your tongue a bell,
That ding-dong, dong-ding, tolls away!
Yet mind not what such 'rag-a-muffins' say.
Roar still 'gainst 'backstair's influence,' I pray,
And lash 'the pages of the water closet' well.
To 'dust and ashes' pray thee grind 'em,
Though I'm told 'twould puzzle you to find 'em;
But John, like water, thou must find thy 'level';
Those horn-book politicans are the devil,

[1] *Richm. Enq.*, Dec. 4, 12, 22, 29, 1807; Jan. 3, 14; Feb. 4, 16, 1808.
[2] *Id.*, Dec. 17, 1807; Mar. 8, 11, Nov. 4, 1808.
[3] *Id.*, Mar. 15, Oct. 7, Nov. 8, 1808.
[4] *Id.*, Jan. 19, Feb. 16, Mar. 4, and Apr. 1, 1808.

Somehow or other, they've so pleased the nation:
In spite of 'cobweb theories' and 'sharks,'
Russells, Garnetts, Clays and Clarks,
'Straight-jackets,' 'water gruel' and 'depletion,'
Yes, yes, in spite of all those *curious things*,
The name of each with glory around us rings,
Whilst *thou*, of even patriotism doubted,
Art on all hands detested—laughed at—'scouted';
Nay, many think (though this perhaps is scandal)
That soon you'll nothing be but plain Jack R——dal."[1]

"The machine" was too much for the "highbrows"; to use the slang of our own time. When the ballots were counted, it was apparent enough that the minority Republicans had been simply beating the air. The whole vote cast for the Madison electors was 13,876; for the Monroe electors, 3,308. The only counties carried by Monroe were Loudoun, Harrison, Wood, Hardy, Berkeley, Princess Anne, Warwick, Northampton, and Accomac, though he did carry Norfolk Borough besides; and these were nearly all Federalist strongholds.

And now let us return for a few moments to William B. Giles, who was one of Madison's energetic and efficient supporters in the contest. In the same letter to Nicholson, in which Randolph said that Giles was helping to pull him down, he also said: "I am told that he (Giles) has shown a letter, which I wrote him in full confidence during the winter, to my prejudice. 'Where dwelleth honor?'"[2] And he was not the man to be stirred deeply enough to ask such a question as this and to do nothing more. The feelings, aroused in him by Giles' breach of confidence, became still angrier, as the struggle between the majority and the minority Republicans grew more intense, and finally culminated in an interview, of which Benjamin Watkins Leigh has left an account, dated Petersburg,

[1] Garland, v. 1, 278.
[2] July 7, 1806, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

Aug. 4, 1807. In this paper, Leigh says that at Richmond, in the previous May, Randolph had obtained from Giles, and shewn to him a copy of the letter from Randolph to Giles, which was the subject of the breach of confidence; and that, later in the day, Randolph had come to him at the capitol, and requested him to accompany him to Giles' lodgings, in order that he might be present while he propounded some questions to Giles about the letter; which Leigh did. After these questions had been pointedly addressed to Giles by Randolph, and had been answered, the former, with great mildness, observed that he was happy in the opportunity that had been afforded to him to satisfy Randolph of the propriety of his own motives and conduct; that, though he had never regarded the letter as a confidential one, he had shewn it only to a few gentlemen, whom he considered Randolph's personal and political friends; and that, in showing it, he had been actuated merely by the motives which had often induced him to shew, and sometimes even to read, in a court yard, letters containing political information. He further said that, whatever political differences had lately arisen, he had always spoken and thought of Randolph with undiminished personal respect and esteem.

Here Randolph interrupted with the exclamation that all this was nothing to the purpose; that Giles had written him a letter stuffed with professions of friendship, to which in a moment of warmth, of hurry, and of confidence, he had returned an answer, containing sentiments which indeed he had often publicly expressed, but which were presented to Giles in the unconsidered language of private correspondence; and that Giles had exposed that answer to the misconceptions, and of course to the misrepresentations, of others, for whom it never was intended. Then, after giving further expression to his feelings in a strain of severe and pointed reproach, he concluded by declaring that, to expose a private letter, to betray the unsuspecting

and unguarded confidence of friendship, as he conceived Giles had done, was a most dishonorable and base dereliction of every principle, which regulated the intercourse of gentlemen.

At this, Giles said that he wished to hear no more language of that kind; that he would consider the conduct proper on his part, and that Randolph might perhaps hear from him; whereupon Randolph bid him good morning, and left the room. Returning, however, he told Giles that he would certainly have demanded an explanation of him at Washington, during the preceding winter, had not his own feelings warned him, that the state of decrepitude, in which he saw Giles, should withhold him from inflicting on him the chastisement which he meditated, and which Giles' conduct justly deserved.

To this no reply was made by Giles, and Randolph immediately retired; leaving Leigh behind with Giles, who had requested Leigh to remain with him when Randolph first left the room. Then, upon being told by Leigh that he should certainly have deemed such a letter a confidential one, Giles declared that he was willing (if Randolph pleased) to submit the matter to Leigh and any other gentleman, and to abide by the results of their deliberations on the subject; and he requested Leigh to interpose his good offices, so far as to state this fact to Randolph. This request was complied with, but Randolph immediately and decisively rejected the suggestion, declaring that he would submit his feelings to the arbitrament of no gentlemen, however impartial and respectable.

This rebuff was followed by an effort upon the part of Leigh, who "anticipated extremities," and Major Eggleston, who had been called in as Giles' friend, to bring about an adjustment of the difficulty upon these terms: Giles was to acknowledge that he had acted improperly and unguardedly in showing Randolph's letter, though without any hostile motive, and that Randolph had cause to

complain, and was to declare that he was sorry for what had happened; provided that Randolph would pledge himself, after receiving this message, to retract the harsh expressions that he had addressed to Giles. The proposition was submitted to Randolph, but he rejected it as he had done the other, averring his fixed determination to submit to the arbitrament of no person whatever; and saying that, if Giles chose to make an apology, he must do so without any pledge from him that he would pursue any particular ulterior course.[1] (*a*)

This, too, we suppose, was one of the episodes in Randolph's life which led Henry Adams to assert that Randolph never pressed a quarrel to the end, or resented an insult further than was necessary to repel it.[2] Deprived of its malicious innuendo, the statement is one that we should be glad to make ourselves, if we could only make it truthfully, but we could not. In the same connection, Adams says that Randolph was notorious for threatening to use his weapons on every occasion of a tavern quarrel, but that at such times he was probably excited by drink, and that, when quite himself, he never used them, if it was possible to avoid it. But, pray, when was Randolph ever engaged in a tavern quarrel?

An amusing feature of Leigh's narrative is found in the fact that Major Eggleston was a Magistrate, but did not hesitate to relieve Leigh of all embarrassment, when the latter first took up the subject of the altercation with him, by assuring Leigh that he would never act in his official capacity on any information that he might give him. So long as the social superstition, on which the duel rested, survived, the jurisdiction, with which the Court of Honor was clothed by public opinion, was paramount to the authority of any court created by the laws.

Randolph was re-elected to Congress in 1809; Tell and

[1] Va. State Libr.

[2] *J. R.*, by Adams, 260.

Ritchie notwithstanding; but he did not return to Washington until March 11, 1810. On March 22, he moved the resolution that the military and naval establishments ought to be reduced.

"With respect to war," he said, "we have—thank God!—in the Atlantic a *fosse* wide and deep enough to keep off any immediate danger to our territory. The belligerents of Europe know as well as we feel that war is out of the question. No, Sir! if our preparation was for battle, the State physicians have mistaken the state of the patient. We have been embargoed and non-intercoursed almost into a consumption and this is not the time for battle."[1]

Randolph was right. In eight years, Washington had spent $11,250,000 on the army and navy; in four, John Adams had spent $18,000,000, and, after reducing this amount to $8,600,000, during his first four years, Jefferson, during his second four, had brought the total up from that amount to $16,000,000, and nearly to the limit reached by John Adams *flagrante bello*.[2] And what was there to show for such an expenditure? A demoralized army, led by Wilkinson, a general who would have belonged wholly to the province of burlesque if his treason had not kept him partly out of it; a navy of impotent gunboats, and the sword, which should have been the terror of the enemy, suicidally turned, pursuant to the timorous and stupid counsels of a false policy of commercial restriction, against the heart of its own master.

In the beginning, Randolph's proposition was received with an extraordinary measure of approval by the House. Without a dissenting voice, it resolved in committee of the whole that the military and naval establishments ought to be reduced,[3] and the next day by a vote of 60 to 31 this

[1] *A. of C.*, 1809–10; v. 2, 1612.
[2] *Hist. of U. S.*, by Adams, v. 5, 200.
[3] *A. of C.*, 1809–10; v. 2, 1879.

resolution was formally adopted by the House[1]; but, later, when bills were reported by Randolph and Smilie for the purpose of carrying the resolution into effect, the House, yielding doubtless under external pressure, or the solicitations of patronage, to one of those sudden spasms of regurgitation, to which all legislative assemblies are subject at times, went back practically upon everything to which it had given its approval a few days before. However, the end of the session came before the discussion of the subject had entirely ceased.

A more barren session of Congress there has rarely been. Perhaps, it would have been livelier if Randolph had not been detained at Roanoke so long.

"We adjourned last night," he wrote to Nicholson, "a little after 12, having terminated a session of more than 5 months by authorizing a loan of as many millions, and—all is told. The incapacity of government has long ceased to be a laughing matter. The cabinet is all to pieces, and the two Houses have tumbled about their own ears."[2]

This session, however, was enlivened by one of Randolph's sallies. On April 2, 1810, he offered a resolution that the existing act interdicting commercial intercourse, etc., ought to be immediately repealed; and to this resolution Mr. Montgomery, of Maryland, offered a high-sounding amendment in the following words: "And that provision ought to be made by law for maintaining the rights, honor and independence of the United States against the edicts of Great Britain and France."[3] On a motion to postpone action on the amendment until the next day, Randolph said:

"How does the gentleman who made this motion know but that, in my anxiety to get a glimpse of the project of the

[1] *A. of C.*, 1809–10, v. 2, 1885.
[2] May 2, 1810; Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.
[3] *A. of C.*, 1809–10; v. 2, 1705.

gentleman from Maryland, I shall agree to incorporate his amendment with my proposition, and let the subject go to two different committees? I trust that the gentleman from Maryland would be at the head of one committee, on which I certainly have no desire to be placed, and, should I be put on the other, we shall each be acting in our respective provinces —I in mine aiming to get at a specified object by the most direct way, and he, in his, supporting, Atlas-like, upon his shoulders the vast interests of the State."[1]

On the whole, Randolph's course in this Congress was sufficiently significant to draw from Henry Adams this observation upon it:

"With all Randolph's faults, he had more of the qualities, training and insight of a statesman than were to be found elsewhere among the representatives in the 11th Congress; and, although himself largely the cause of the chaos he described, he felt its disgrace and dangers."[2]

If the debates of the 11th Congress were rather dull, Randolph did not permit his personal relations with the members of the House to suffer that reproach; for it was during the second session of this Congress that he caned Willis Alston and barely escaped a duel with Eppes. His Diary shows that, at this session, he did not reach Washington from Roanoke until Jan. 23, 1811; nor does it indicate that he had been detained at Roanoke by sickness or any other special cause, unless it was the attention required from him by the partition between Judith Randolph and himself of his brother Theodorick's lands on the Little Roanoke.

There had long been an ugly feud between Alston and himself which had begun with a violent eruption as far back as 1804. This incident, and along with it the later one, which resulted in the caning, is thus narrated by Sawyer:

[1] *A. of C.*, 1809–10; v. 2, 1706.
[2] *Hist. of U. S.*, v. 5, 209.

"Randolph never could bear Willis Alston. The first occasion of their enmity arose out of a dispute which ended in an affray at the dinner table in 1804 at Miss Shields' boarding house. Alston was somewhat arrogant and presuming in conversation, and, during a warm altercation between him and Randolph, he made use of some expressions which Randolph deemed personal and insulting. The ladies having finished their meal, Randolph assisted in handing them out, and then, pouring out a glass of wine, dashed it in Alston's face. Alston sent a decanter at his head in return, and these and similar missiles continued to fly to and fro, until there was much destruction of glass ware, though the blood of the grape was all that was shed on the occasion. Alston sent either a challenge, or a note demanding an explanation, but Randolph, having locked himself in his room, refused admittance, and denounced instant death to anyone that should attempt to enter on any such mission. So the matter ended for that time, and Randolph continued to treat Alston afterwards with studied contempt; being especially careful never to mention his name, or notice him in debate. He was driven from this course, however, at the session of January, 1810, by some highly provoking remarks of Alston, when, pouncing upon him at one desperate spring, with fury flashing from his eyes, and the most bitter sarcasm, calling Alston 'that thing,' gave him such an unmerciful verbal castigation, as made Alston cower and cringe in his seat.

"Alston, however, could not learn to hold his tongue, and, on many frequent occasions, 'would have a fling' at Randolph. During the same session, the House having, on motion of Mr. Randolph, adjourned, as the members were breaking up, Alston remarked, loud enough to be heard by several members, and among them John Randolph himself, that the puppy still had respect shown him. Whether he alluded to Randolph, or his dog, of which he always had some at his heels, was a question, but as Alston proceeded down the stairs, ahead of Randolph, the latter observed; 'I have a great mind to cane him, and I believe I will,' and immediately commenced a battery on Alston's head. Alston had no weapon, but turned round and tried to reach Randolph with his hand and seize him by the

throat, and also kicked at him, but Randolph, having the vantage ground, repeated his blows, knocked Alston's hat off, and gave him some severe cuts, till the blood began to flow. They were then separated. Alston, 'unpacking his heart with words,' was conducted to his quarters, where his wounds were dressed. The next day he appeared in his seat with his head bandaged. The district court, then in session, took the case in hand. The grand jury presented an indictment against Randolph for a breach of the peace, and the court allowed him to offer evidence in extenuation, before mulcting him in a fine. This he did, and proved by several members that Alston had frequently made use of provoking language in regard to him. The court imposed a fine of $20, which Randolph paid, and left the bar, by which their appraisement of Alston's head was fixed at a very moderate estimate."[1]

There is also an account of the first of these two incidents in a letter from Dr. Manasseh Cutler to Capt. Poole, dated Feb. 13, 1804, in which the writer refers to it as "in a very strict sense a square fight between the all important head-man of the party [the Republican party] and another who ranks as his second or perhaps third lieutenant," and tells us that Randolph, not content with dashing the wine in Alston's face, broke the wine-glass itself over Alston's head.[2]

Randolph's own version of the second incident was given in a letter to Nicholson written five days after it occurred:

"You are mistaken," he said, "in your notion of the cause of my *coup d'état*, although partly right; for there *was* 'a puppy' in the way. This poor wretch, after I had prevailed upon the House to adjourn, uttered *at* me some very offensive language which I was not bound to overhear; but he took care to throw himself in my way on the staircase and repeat his foul language to another in my hearing. Whereupon I said —— if it were

[1] P. 42.
[2] *Life of Dr. Cutler*, v. 2, 162.

worth while I would cane you —— and I believe I will cane you! And caned him accordingly, with all the nonchalance of Sir Harry Wildair himself. Some of the ruffians, who were with him (who I know not, those whom I suspected and yet believe to have committed the act having denied it), wrested my cane from behind and put it into his hands; but he dared not use it, and I took it from him. I believe, however, that, but for the casual coming up of Knickerbacker, I should have been trampled to death or maimed by *his* partisans. My person, however, thank God! remained unviolated. Perhaps, the last expression may induce you to think that I was down. Not at all. When the crowd poured in, and he, at a distance, began to assail me with billingsgate, I could not stand the filth but sheered off to my carriage. For Macon's sake (although he despises him), I regret it, and for my own also, for in such cases victory is defeat. I pledge you my word that my dogs had not directly or indirectly the slightest agency in this business."[1]

The reference to the collision in Randolph's Diary is very brief: "Wed. 23 [1811] to Washington. Cane Alston. J. Clay and Kidder R. [Randolph] present."

But not so brief are Randolph's comments in a letter to James M. Garnett on a communication to *The Spirit of '76*, dated Georgetown, Aug. 14, 1812, which was apparently written by Garnett. The communication states that there had appeared in *The Democratic Press*, a paper published in Philadelphia by Binns, an infamous calumny against Mr. John Randolph, purporting to be an extract from a Washington letter charging Randolph, in direct terms, with receiving British gold and with having been seen a short time before riding in the British Minister's carriage; and that Binns had had the impudence to send a copy of the article to Randolph, as if he expected that Randolph would descend so low as to reply to it, but that the only notice that Randolph gave to it was to write to a lawyer of his acquaintance in Philadelphia, requesting

[1] Jan. 28, 1811, Bryan MSS.

him immediately to demand the author, and, if Binns did not give him up, to sue Binns; and that Binns, stipulating *that no other than legal redress should be resorted to*, had given up the Hon. Willis Alston. In his comments, Randolph declares that the communication had passed over one material fact. As soon, he said, as the inquiry was set on foot by Mr. Dallas at his instance, Binns asked for time to get an answer from his "honorable correspondent," and that several letters passed between Binns and Alston, before the latter would consent to have his name given up even with the stipulation *de baculo;* but that, Alston's heart forsaking him for fear that Randolph might not adhere to the terms of his arrangement with Binns, he had left Washington the day that Binns' letter giving up his name had left Philadelphia.[1]

A few days after Randolph applied his cane to Alston's head, he and Eppes were drawn into a colloquy, in the course of which Eppes charged him with delaying action on a bill for the purpose of defeating it, and was "given the lie" by him in reply. A challenge was forthwith indited by Eppes and handed to Richard M. Johnson, a member of the House from Kentucky, who delivered it to Randolph. Each principal then entered upon a course of practice for the purpose of perfecting his aim. Randolph engaged the services of a Baltimore surgeon, Dr. Gibson, and, under the drilling of a first-rate shot, practiced two hours daily in the woods on the turnpike northeast of the Capitol. Eppes selected Gen. Wilkinson as his instructor, and, in a few days, though previously altogether unaccustomed to handling a pistol, became a first-rate marksman. We give these circumstances in the words in which they are given to us by Sawyer who was one of Eppes' friends. Sawyer further tells us that, while the duel was impending, Wilkinson called on him, and informed him of the rapid proficiency that Eppes was

[1] J. R.'s Diary.

acquiring in the use of the pistol, but was decided in his opinion that the duel would not come off.

"If they fight," said he, "Eppes will kill him; but take my word for it Randolph will back out. All this blustering and fuss is merely intended to bully Eppes, and then, through the disinterested interference of a friend, to get the quarrel accommodated on the best terms he can." "And so indeed," affirms Sawyer, "it happened. On the eve of adjournment on the 2d of March, 1811, a friend of Randolph called on Richard M. Johnson, Eppes' second, who was a good natured fellow, as was his principal, Eppes himself, and offered, on the withdrawal of the challenge, to make a satisfactory explanation on the part of Randolph. The offer was accepted; the matter amicably settled, and the honor of the parties preserved whole with their hides."[1]

Fortunately, the insinuation which lurks in these words is conclusively refuted by a letter from Wm. H. Crawford, the friend to whom Sawyer refers, to Randolph, dated March 28, 1811, in which Crawford states that steps were taken by the friends of the principals without their knowledge to effect an accommodation of the difficulty; that the terms, upon which they agreed that it should be settled, were reduced to writing; and that the paper showed on its face that the first and most important suggestion, looking to its adjustment, was made by Richard M. Johnson, who, after stating that he was determined not to stand upon etiquette, and that the challenge might be considered as withdrawn, outlined a plan of reconciliation which, with a slight alteration by Eppes, "relating to the veracity of each," was accepted by the principals. The agreement provided that Randolph should declare that, in saying that the opinion of Eppes was untrue, he intended only to repel the insinuation that he understood to have been made by ascribing to him a

[1] P. 40.

motive which he had disclaimed, and that Eppes should declare that he did not intend to ascribe to Randolph any motive that the latter had disclaimed. And so, with the usual hair-triggered refinements, which were as much a part of the duel as the hair-triggered pistols, the matter ended.[1]

For the value of Crawford as a witness, we need not go further than the remarkable tribute paid to him by Albert Gallatin. "One man at last appeared who filled my expectations. This man was Mr. Crawford, who united to a powerful mind a most correct judgment and an inflexible integrity."[2] (*a*)

Sawyer also states that, on the occasion of his clash with Eppes, Randolph came into the House after a hearty dinner which was well diluted with the homely stimulus of whiskey[3]—one of those charges, which are much more easily made than disproved, and, when made, should have behind them at least the moral standing of a scrupulously accurate author; which Sawyer was flagrantly not. The truth is that, if Randolph ever exhibited the least anxiety about the outcome of the Eppes challenge, he was singularly successful in disguising it. According to Sawyer himself, immediately after receiving the challenge, he retired from the House for the purpose of making his arrangements for the meeting; and on his return, being informed by the Speaker, when he was about to enter again into the discussion, out of which the quarrel had arisen, that the House had ordered the previous question and thereby cut off all further debate, he fell into a furious passion, and declared that the House had disgraced itself.[4] Nor could anything be cooler than the contemporaneous entries which Randolph made about the matter in his Diary, in one of which it is manifest that his

[1] Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong
[2] *Gallatin*, by Henry Adams, 598.
[3] P. 39. [4] P. 40.

mind was far more elated by the last proof that his favorite Fidget had given of her bottom than depressed by the prospect of the approaching duel:

"Sat. March 2. Sterrett Ridgely [Randolph's second] and Dr. Gibson [Randolph's surgeon] arrived from Baltimore. Ridgely sends his servt. Dr's instruments.

"Sun. March 3. Ridgely sets out about 4 o'clock P. M. in a violent snow storm on Fidget. Reaches McKay's (Spurriers) about 8. Dispatches a man to Baltimore for powder and returns himself with it before daybreak the next morning. Neither rider nor horse fatigued. Roads execrable.

"March 4th. Accommodation of preceding evening perfected."

No! once let Randolph be satisfied that his antagonist was a gentleman, and the hazards of a duel sat upon him as lightly as any of the other hazards of public life. The only element of calculation that entered into his conduct with respect to his personal controversies was the one created by his desire to select the proper vindicatory instrument that the case called for. If the object of his resentment was a Wilkinson, the pillory of public scorn and a criminal investigation answered his purpose; if an Alston, a glass of wine or a cane; if a Robert Barraud Taylor, a Thomas Mann Randolph, or a John W. Eppes he resorted to his duelling pistols.

Randolph was elected to the 12th Congress and it proved to be a highly important Congress both to the people of the United States generally, and to him particularly; for it was by this Congress that the War of 1812 was finally declared, and it was during its sessions that Randolph, by reason of his opposition to that war, incurred the popular resentment which brought about his defeat at the next Congressional election in 1813. The first effect of the Congressional election of 1811 was to introduce into the House a notable group of young, able,

and spirited men: Henry Clay, of Kentucky; John Caldwell Calhoun and William Lowndes, of South Carolina, and Felix Grundy, of Tennessee, who were disgusted with the half-hearted measures employed by Jefferson and Madison for the enforcement of our rights on the ocean, and resolved, together with Peter B. Porter, of New York, Langdon Cheves, of South Carolina, and Richard M. Johnson, of Kentucky, who had been members of the House during the 11th Congress, come what might, fearlessly to assert the strong instincts of national pride and indignation, which, after so many years of indignity and injury, were stirring in the breasts of their constituents. None of these young men had attained the age of 40, they were free from the spell of the old English traditions, and all of them became useful and distinguished members of Congress. Nothing perhaps but delicate health and an early death prevented one of them—Lowndes—from being one of the most conspicuous figures in our political history. It was his scholarly character which led Randolph to declare on one occasion in later years that he had not heard three words of good English spoken in the House since Lowndes' death. It was of Lowndes too that he once said, when the former was stating the case of an adversary with his usual clearness and fairness: "He will never be able to answer himself."[1] Clay and Calhoun, of course, with Daniel Webster, whose name was soon to be associated imperishably with theirs, constitute a classical trilogy of parliamentary talents which apparently can no more be reproduced any longer in the womb of our national genius than if they were so many Elizabethan dramatists of the highest rank. The shining pre-eminence as an orator, which Randolph enjoyed in the House between 1799 and 1811, was unquestionably, to some extent, due to the mediocrity of his fellow-Congressmen. There is nothing like a dull back-

[1] *Life of James Buchanan*, by Curtis, v. 1, 26.

ground for bringing out the lustre of a bright object. With the exception of Gallatin, Marshall, Bayard, Giles, and Quincy, there was really no man in the House during that interval of time whose gifts could be reasonably measured with his. But now he had to contend with more than one man even better fitted than he, in many respects, to sway the faculties and emotions of a deliberative assembly; and no one was quicker than he to realize just what the advent of Clay and Calhoun in the House, and the new-born spirit of nationality, of which they were the exponents, meant. A few months, after the opening of the 12th Congress, he said to a friend: "They have entered this House with their eye on the Presidency, and mark my words, Sir, we shall have war before the end of the session."[1]

The "war" Republicans controlled the organization of the House, when it was called together by Madison on Nov. 4, 1811.[2] Macon might well have been their choice for Speaker, as he was again in good party standing, and was ready to fall in with their plans; but he was ignored, and Henry Clay, the boldest and most zealous member of the faction, was elected Speaker, though he was a new member of the House and only 34 years of age.[3] On the next day, the House received a message from the President stating that Great Britain, instead of repealing its obnoxious orders in council, had, at a moment, when such action was least expected, put them into more rigorous execution; that indemnity and redress for other wrongs had continued to be withheld by her, and that our coasts and the mouths of our harbors had again witnessed scenes not less derogatory to the dearest of our national rights than vexatious to the regular course of our trade.

"With this evidence of hostile inflexibility in trampling on rights which no independent nation can relinquish, Congress," the message said, "will feel the duty of putting the United

[1] Garland, v. 1, 306. [2] *A. of C.*, 1811–12, v. 1, 331. [3] *Id.*, 332.

States into an armor and an attitude demanded by the crisis and corresponding with the national spirit and expectations."[1]

Clay promptly proceeded to organize and man the committees of the House in such a manner as to give full control of the situation to the War Party in the House. One Select Committee was formed to consider so much of the Message as related to our foreign relations; another so much of it as related to Military Affairs, and another so much of it as related to Naval Affairs. Of these three Committees, Porter, David R. Williams, whose manly spirit had been thoroughly exasperated by the faltering foreign policy of Jefferson, and Cheves, were respectively made Chairmen. Among the persons appointed on the Standing Committees of Ways and Means, were Cheves and Johnson.[2]

A few days later, Porter as Chairman of the Select Committee on Foreign Relations presented a report to the House, declaring that the period had arrived, when, in the opinion of the Committee, it was the sacred duty of Congress to call forth the patriotism and resources of the country, and recommending that an increase of 10,000 men be added to the regular army, that 50,000 volunteers be levied, that all the war vessels not in actual service and worthy of repair be fitted out for service, and that merchant vessels be armed.[3]

This report was followed by an animated debate in which Porter and Grundy were among the leading speakers, and, in reply to them, Randolph delivered a speech so replete with graphic and eloquent passages as to become one of the commonplaces of our school readers and declamation platforms[4]:

"It is a question," said he, "as it has been presented to the House, of *peace* or *war*," and then, deprecating a decision by

[1] *A. of C.*, 1811–12, v. 1, 331, 11.
[2] *Id.*, 333, 343. [3] *Id.*, 376, 377. [4] *Id.*, 441.

the Speaker, which tended to narrow his selection of topics, he continued: "But it is impossible that the discussion of a question, broad as the wide ocean of our foreign concerns, involving every consideration of interest, of right, of happiness, and of safety at home; touching in every point all that is dear to freemen, 'their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor,' can be tied down by the narrow rules of technical routine. The Committee of Foreign Relations has, indeed, decided that the subject of arming the militia (which I pressed upon them as indispensable to the public safety) does not come within the scope of their authority. On what ground, I have been, and still am, unable to see, they have felt themselves authorized (when the subject was before another committee) to recommend the raising of standing armies, with a view (as has been declared) of immediate war—a war not of defence, but of conquest, of aggrandizement, of ambition—a war foreign to the interests of this country, to the interests of humanity itself.

"I know not how gentlemen, calling themselves republicans, can advocate such a war. What was their doctrine in 1798–9, when the command of the army, that highest of all possible trusts in any government, be the form what it may, was reposed in the bosom of the Father of his country! the sanctuary of a nation's love!, the only hope that never came in vain? When other worthies of the revolution, Hamilton, Pinckney, and the younger Washington, men of tried patriotism, of approved conduct and valor, of untarnished honor, held subordinate command under him? Republicans were then unwilling to trust a standing army even to his hands who had given proof that he was above all human temptation. Where now is the revolutionary hero to whom you are about to confide this sacred trust? To whom will you confide the charge of leading the flower of our youth to the heights of Abraham? Will you find him in the person of an acquitted felon? [Wilkinson] What! *Then* you were unwilling to vote an army, when such men as have been named held high command! when Washington himself was at the head. Did you *then* show such reluctance, feel such scruples? and are you now nothing loth, fearless of every consequence? Will you say that your provocations were less then than now, when your direct commerce

was interdicted, your ambassadors hooted with derision from the French court, tribute demanded, actual war waged upon you? Those who opposed the army then, were, indeed, denounced as the partisans of France, as the same men, some of them at least, are now held up as the advocates of England; those firm and undeviating republicans, who then dared, and now dare, to cling to the ark of the Constitution, to defend it even at the expense of their fame rather than surrender themselves to the wild projects of mad ambition! There is a fatality, Sir, attending plenitude of power. Soon or late, some mania seizes upon its possessors; they fall from the dizzy height, through the giddiness of their own heads. Like a vast estate, heaped up by the labor and industry of one man which seldom survives the third generation, power gained by patient assiduity, by a faithful and regular discharge of its attendant duties, soon gets above its own origin. Intoxicated with their own greatness, the federal party fell. Will not the same causes produce the same effects now as then? Sir, you may raise this army, you may build up this vast structure of patronage, this mighty apparatus of favoritism; but 'lay not the flattering unction to your souls'; you will never live to enjoy the succession; you sign your political death warrant. . . .

"I am not surprised at the war-spirit which is manifesting itself in gentlemen from the South. In the year 1805–6, in a struggle for the carrying-trade of belligerent colonial produce, this country was most unwisely brought into collision with the great powers of Europe. By a series of most impolitic and ruinous measures, utterly incomprehensible to every rational sober-minded man, the Southern planters, by their own votes, succeeded in knocking down the price of cotton to seven cents, and of tobacco (a few choice crops excepted) to nothing, and in raising the price of blankets (of which a few would not be amiss in a Canadian campaign), coarse woollens, and every article of first necessity, three or four hundred per cent. And, now that by our own acts we have brought ourselves into this unprecedented condition, we must get out of it in any way but by an acknowledgment of our own want of wisdom and forecast. But is war the true remedy? Who will profit by it? Speculators; a few lucky merchants who draw prizes in the lottery; commis-

saries and contractors. Who must suffer by it? The people. It is their blood, their taxes, that must flow to support it. . . .

"I am gratified to find gentlemen acknowledging the demoralizing and destructive consequences of the non-importation law; confessing the truth of all that its opponents foretold when it was enacted; and will you plunge yourselves in war because you have passed a foolish and ruinous law, and are ashamed to repeal it? 'But our good friend, the French Emperor, stands in the way of its repeal,' and, as we cannot go too far in making sacrifices to him, who has given such demonstration of his *love for the Americans*, we must, in point of fact, become parties to his war. 'Who can be so cruel as to refuse him this favor?' My imagination shrinks from the miseries of such a connection. I call upon the House to reflect whether they are not about to abandon all reclamation for the unparalleled outrages, 'insults and injuries' of the French Government; to give up our claim for plundered millions, and ask what reparation or atonement we can expect to obtain in hours of future dalliance, after we shall have made a tender of our person to this great deflowerer of the virginity of republics. We have, by our own wise (I will not say *wise-acre*) measures, so increased the trade and wealth of Montreal and Quebec that, at last, we begin to cast a wistful eye at Canada. Having done so much towards its improvement, by the exercise of our 'restrictive energies,' we begin to think the laborer worthy of his hire, and to put in claim for our portion. Suppose it ours, are we any nearer our point? As his minister said to the King of Epirus, 'May we not as well take our bottle of wine before as after this exploit?' Go! march to Canada! Leave the broad bosom of the Chesapeake, and her hundred tributary rivers, the whole line of sea-coast, from Machias to St. Mary's, unprotected! You have taken Quebec—have you *conquered England?* Will you seek for the deep foundations of her power in the frozen deserts of Labrador?

'Her march is on the mountain wave,
Her home is on the deep!'

Will you call upon her to leave your ports and harbors untouched, only just till you can return from Canada to defend

them? The coast is to be left defenceless, whilst men of the interior are revelling in conquest and spoil. But grant for a moment, for mere argument's sake, that in Canada you would touch the sinews of her strength, instead of removing a clog upon her resources—an incumbrance, but one, which, from a spirit of honor, she will vigorously defend. In what situation would you then place some of the best men of the nation? As Chatham and Burke, and the whole band of her patriots prayed for her defeat in 1776, so must some of the truest friends to the country deprecate the success of our arms against the only power that holds in check the arch enemy of mankind."...

Later, came one of the appeals to the sectional jealousy of the South upon which Randolph was to practice with such consummate skill in the subsequent stages of his career:

"Make it out that Great Britain did instigate the Indians on the late occasion, and I am ready to battle, but not for dominion. I am unwilling, however, under present circumstances, to take Canada at the risk of the Constitution; to embark in a common cause with France, and be dragged at the wheels of the car of some Burr or Bonaparte. For a gentleman from Tennessee, or Genesee, or Lake Champlain, there may be some prospect of advantage. Their hemp would bear a great price by the exclusion of foreign supply. In that, too, the great importers are deeply interested. The upper country on the Hudson and the Lakes would be enriched by the supplies for the troops, which they alone could furnish. They would have the exclusive market; to say nothing of the increased preponderance from the acquisition of Canada of that section of the Union, which the Southern and Western States had already felt so severely in the Apportionment Bill."

Equally artful was Randolph's appeal to those fears which were to become as responsive as an Æolian harp. On the danger arising to the South from its black population he said that he would touch as tenderly as possible; it was with reluctance that he touched on this subject at all; but, in cases of great emergency, the state physician

must not be deterred by a sickly, hysterical humanity, from probing the wound of his patient; he must not be withheld by a fastidious and mistaken humanity from representing his true situation to his friends, or even to the sick man himself, where the occasion called for it.

"What, Sir," he asked, "is the situation of the slaveholding States? During the war of the Revolution, so fixed were their habits of subordination, that when the whole Southern country was overrun by the enemy, who invited them to desert, no fear was ever entertained of an insurrection of the slaves. During the war of seven years, with our country in possession of the enemy, no such danger was ever apprehended. But should we therefore be unobservant spectators of the progress of society within the last twenty years? Of the silent but powerful change wrought by time and chance upon its composition and temper? When the fountains of the great deep of abomination were broken up, even the poor slaves did not escape the general deluge. The French revolution polluted even them. Nay, there were not wanting men in that House—witness their legislative *Legendre*, the butcher who once held a seat there, to preach upon that floor these imprescriptible rights to a crowded audience of blacks in the galleries; teaching them that they were equal to their masters; in other words, advising them to cut their throats. Similar doctrines are disseminated by peddlers from New England and elsewhere throughout the Southern country, and masters have been found so infatuated as by their lives and conversation, by a general contempt of order, morality and religion, unthinkingly to cherish those seeds of self-destruction to them and their families. What is the consequence? Within the last ten years, repeated alarms of insurrection among the slaves, some of them awful indeed. From the spreading of this infernal doctrine, the whole Southern country has been thrown into a state of insecurity. Men, dead to the operation of moral causes, have taken away from the poor slave his habits of loyalty and obedience to his master, which lightened his servitude by a double operation; beguiling his own cares, and disarming his master's suspicions and severity; and now, like true empirics in politics, you are called

JOHN RANDOLPH

From the portrait by J. W. Jarvis owned by Mrs. Simpson wife of Admiral Edward Simpson.

upon to trust to the mere physical strength of the fetter which holds him in bondage. You have deprived him of all moral restraint;you have tempted him to eat of the tree of knowledge; just enough to perfect him in wickedness; you have opened his eyes to his nakedness; you have armed his nature against the hand that has fed, that has clothed, him; that has cherished him in sickness; that hand which, before he became a pupil of your school, he had been accustomed to press with respectful affection. You have done all this, and then show him the gibbet and the wheel, as incentives to a sullen, repugnant obedience. God forbid, Sir, that the Southern States should ever see an enemy on their shores, with these infernal principles of French fraternity in the van. While talking of taking Canada, some of us are shuddering for our own safety at home. I speak from facts when I say that the night-bell never tolls for fire in Richmond that the mother does not hug the infant more closely to her bosom. I have been a witness of some of the alarms in the capital of Virginia."

And this was the manner in which Randolph repelled the accusation that the course of men, like himself, was determined by mere subserviency to Great Britain:

"Against whom are these charges brought?" he asked. "Against men who in the war of the Revolution were in the councils of the nation or fighting the battles of your country. And *by whom* are they made? By *runaways*, chiefly *from the British dominions*, since the breaking out of the French troubles. It is insufferable! It cannot be borne! It must, and ought, with severity, to be put down in this House and out of it — to meet the *lie direct*. We have no fellow-feeling for the suffering and oppressed Spaniards! Yet even *them* we do not reprobate. Strange! that we should have no objection to any [other] people or government, civilized or savage, in the whole world. The great Autocrat of all the Russias receives the homage of our high consideration; the Dey of Algiers and his Divan of pirates are very civil, good sort of people, with whom we find no difficulty in maintaining the relations of peace and amity; 'Turks, Jews and Infidels'; *Mellimelli*, or the *Little*

Turtle; barbarians and savages, of every clime and color are welcome to our arms. With chiefs of banditti, negro or mulatto, we can *treat* and can *trade*. Name, however, but England, and all our antipathies are up in arms against her. Against whom? Against those whose blood runs in our veins; in common with whom we claim Shakespeare, and Newton, and Chatham, for our countrymen; whose form of government is the freest on earth, our own only excepted; from whom every valuable principle of our own institutions has been borrowed; representation, jury trial, voting the supplies, writs of habeas corpus; our whole civil and criminal jurisprudence; against our *fellow-Protestants*, identified in blood, in language, in religion with ourselves. In what school did the worthies of our land, the Washingtons, Henrys, Hancocks, Franklins, Rutledges, of America, learn those principles of civil liberty which were so nobly asserted by their wisdom and valor? And American resistance to British usurpation was not more warmly cherished by these great men and their compatriots; not more by Washington, Hancock, and Henry, than by Chatham and his illustrious associates in the British Parliament. It ought to be remembered, too, that the *heart* of the *English people* was with us. It was a selfish and corrupt ministry and their servile tools by whom *we* were not more oppressed than they were.

"But the outrages and injuries of England!" Randolph went on. "Bred up in the principles of the Revolution, I can never palliate, much less defend, them. I well remember flying with my mother and her new-born child from Arnold and Philips; and we were driven by Tarleton and other British pandours from pillar to post, while her husband was fighting the battles of his country. The impression is indelible on my memory; and yet (like my worthy old neighbor, who added seven buck-shot to every cartridge at the battle of Guilford, and drew a fine sight at his man) I must be content to be called a tory by a patriot of the last importation. Let us not get rid of one evil, supposing it to be possible, at the expense of a greater *mutatis mutandis*. Suppose France in possession of the British naval power—and to her the trident must pass should England be unable to wield it—what would be your condition? What would be the situation of your seaports and their seafaring

inhabitants? Ask Hamburg, Lubec—ask *Savannah?* What! Sir, when their privateers are pent up in our harbors by the British bull-dogs; when they receive at our hands every rite of hospitality, from which their enemy is excluded; when they capture within our own waters, interdicted to British armed ships, American vessels; when such is their deportment toward you, under such circumstances, what could you expect if they were the uncontrolled lords of the ocean? Had those privateers at Savannah borne British commissions, or had your shipments of cotton, tobacco, ashes, and what not, to London and Liverpool been confiscated, and the proceeds poured into the English exchequer, my life upon it! you would never have listened to any miserable wire-drawn distinctions between 'orders and decrees affecting our neutral rights' and 'municipal decrees,' confiscating in mass our whole property. You would have had instant war! The whole land would have blazed out in war.

"And shall republicans become the instruments of him who has effaced the title of Attila to the '*SCOURGE OF GOD!*' Yet, even Attila, in the falling fortunes of civilization, had, no doubt, his advocates, his tools, his minions, his parasites in the very countries that he overran—sons of that soil whereon his horse had trod, where grass could never after grow. If perfectly fresh, instead of being as I am, my memory clouded, my intellect stupefied, my strength and spirits exhausted—I could not give utterance to that strong detestation which I feel towards (above all other works of the creation) such characters as Genghiz, Tamerlane, Kublai Khan, or Bonaparte. My instincts involuntarily revolt at their bare idea—malefactors of the human race, who grind down man to a mere machine of their impious and bloody ambition. Yet, under all the accumulated wrongs, and insults, and robberies of the last of these chieftains, are we not, in point of fact, about to become a party to his views, a partner in his wars?"

A more effective counter-irritant for such a speech as this than Calhoun's admirable reply to it has rarely been applied. In one of its most striking passages, he said of our maritime rights:

"These rights are essentially attacked and war is the only means of redress. The gentleman from Virginia has suggested none, unless we consider the whole of his speech as recommending patient and resigned submission as the best remedy. Sir, which alternative this House ought to embrace it is not for me to say. I hope the decision is made already by a higher authority than the voice of any man. It is not for the human tongue to instill the sense of independence and honor. This is the work of nature—a generous nature that disdains tame submission to wrong."[1]

After the delivery of his remarkable speech, to which we have just referred, Randolph never relaxed his efforts to avert war so long as the Twelfth Congress lasted. By both direct and dilatory methods, he perseveringly combated every legislative step in the House that tended to it; and, even after Madison had signed on June 8, 1812, the Act of Congress, which declared that a state of war existed, he did not cease to manifest his intense aversion to the conflict that followed. On one occasion, he arraigned a proposition to increase the regular army in terms so vivid that we half overlook their extravagance.[2] On another occasion, he even offered a resolution authorizing the President in his discretion to employ the regular army when not in actual service in the construction of roads, canals, and other works of public utility.[3] And on still another occasion, his highly wrought feelings found voice in these passionate and pathetic words:

"I wish the American people to know what new cause of war has accrued since the accession of the present President to the chair—since the return of Mr. Monroe from his mission to London. And I wish them to know upon what principle this nation which has hitherto been preserved in peace, this nation, which, with all the vexations and losses she has experienced, is still the freest and happiest nation on earth, on what principles she shall be torn from her fast moorings of peace and launched

[1] *A. of C.*, 1811–12, v. 1, 471. [2] *Id.*, 541. [3] *Id.*, 719.

into the tempestuous sea of European politics—into a sea of blood.

"I know I ask in vain. No answer can be given. Such conduct, in my opinion, is in the highest degree wanton and is enough to call down upon us the chastening hand of Him who rules the Universe. We have it in our power to remain free and at peace; our firesides are safe; our ports and harbors may be defended; but we have imbibed a portion of that spirit which lost the angels their seat in heaven. We are about to throw aside our peaceful state and mingle in the dreadful conflict of European ambition and disorder. My heart is sick within me at the sight. It dies at the very idea."[1]

All this was before war was declared, and, a few weeks before that event too, Randolph, stung by the refusal of the House, pursuant to a ruling of Henry Clay, as Speaker, which had been preceded by a considerable amount of vacillation on Clay's part, to consider a resolution, offered by him, which declared that, under the existing circumstances, it was inexpedient to resort to a war with Great Britain, addressed this spirited letter to his constituents[2]:

"To the Freeholders of Charlotte, Prince Edward, Buckingham and Cumberland: Fellow Citizens: I dedicate to you the following fragment. That it appears in its present mutilated shape is to be ascribed to the successful usurpation which has reduced the freedom of speech in one branch of the American Congress to an empty name. It is now established *for the first time and in the person of your representative* that the House may and will refuse to hear a member in his place, or even to receive a motion from him upon the most momentous subject that can be presented for legislative decision. A similar motion was brought forward by the Republican minority in the year 1798 before these modern inventions for stifling the freedom of debate were discovered. It was discussed as a matter of *right* until it was abandoned by the mover in consequence of additional information (the correspondence of our

[1] *A. of C.*, 1811–12, v. 1, 1089. [2] Garland, v. 1, 299.

envoy at Paris) laid before Congress by the President. In 'the reign of terror' the father of the Sedition Law had not the hardihood to proscribe liberty of speech, much less the right of free debate on the floor of Congress. This invasion of the public liberties was reserved for self-styled Republicans who hold your understandings in such contempt as to flatter themselves that you will overlook their every outrage upon the great first principles of free government in consideration of their professions of tender regard for the privileges of the people. It is for you to decide whether they have undervalued your intelligence and spirit or whether they have formed a just estimate of your character. You do not require to be told that the violation of the rights of him, whom you have deputed to represent you, is an invasion of the rights of every man of you, of every individual in society. If this abuse be suffered to pass unredressed—and the people alone are competent to apply the remedy—we must bid adieu to a free form of government forever. Having learned from various sources that a declaration of war would be attempted on Monday next with *closed doors*, I deemed it my duty to endeavor by an exercise of my constitutional functions to arrest this heaviest of all calamities and avert it from our happy country. I accordingly made the effort of which I now give you the result, and of the success of which you will have already been informed before these pages can reach you. I pretend only to give you the substance of my unfinished argument. The glowing words, the language of the heart have passed away with the occasion that called them forth. They are no longer under my control. My design is simply to submit to you the views which have induced me to consider a war with England, under existing circumstances, as comporting neither with the *interest* nor the *honor* of the American people; but as an idolatrous sacrifice of both on the altar of *French rapacity*, *perfidy* and *ambition*.

"France has for years past offered us terms of undefined commercial arrangements as the price of a war with England, which hitherto we have not wanted firmness and virtue to reject. That price is now to be paid. We are tired of holding out; and, following the example of continental Europe, entangled in the artifices, or awed by the power of the Destroyer

of Mankind, we are prepared to become instrumental to his projects of universal dominion. Before these pages meet your eye, *the last Republic of the earth will have enlisted under the banners of the tyrant and become a party to his cause.* The blood of the American freemen must flow to cement his power, to aid in stifling the last struggles of afflicted and persecuted man, to deliver up into his hands the patriots of Spain and Portugal, to establish his empire over the ocean and over the land that gave our fathers birth—to forge our own chains! And yet my friends, we are told, as we were told in the days of Mr. Adams, '*The finger of Heaven points to war.*' Yes, the finger of Heaven *does* point to war. It points to war as it points to the mansions of eternal misery and torture—as a flaming beacon warning us of that vortex which we may not approach but with certain destruction. It points to desolated Europe and warns us of the chastisement of those nations who have offended against the Justice and almost beyond the Mercy of Heaven. It announces the wrath to come upon those, who, ungrateful for the bounty of Providence, not satisfied with the peace, liberty, security and plenty at home, fly, as it were, into the face of the Most High and tempt his forbearance.

"To you *in this place* I can speak with freedom; and it becomes me to do so; nor shall I be deterred by the cavils and the sneers of those, who hold as 'foolishness' all that savors not of worldly wisdom, from expressing fully and freely those sentiments which it has pleased God in his mercy to engrave on my heart. These are no ordinary times; the state of the world is unexampled; the war of the present day is not like that of our Revolution or any which preceded it, at least in modern times. It is a war against the liberties and the happiness of mankind; it is a war in which the whole human race are the victims to gratify the pride and lust of power of a single individual. I beseech you, put it to your own bosoms how far it becomes you as freemen, as Christians, to give your aid and sanction to this impious and bloody war against your brethren of the human family. To such among you, if any such there be, who are insensible to motives, not more dignified and manly than they are intrinsically wise, I would make a different appeal. I adjure you by the regard you have for your own safety and

property, for the liberty and inheritance of your children—by all that you hold dear and sacred—to interpose your constitutional powers to save your country and yourselves from the calamity, the issue of which it is not given to human foresight to divine.

"Ask yourselves if you are willing to become the virtual allies of Bonaparte? Are you willing for the sake of annexing Canada to the Northern States to submit to that overgrowing system of taxation which sends the European laborer supperless to bed, to maintain by the sweat of your brow armies at whose hands you are to receive a future master? Suppose Canada ours. Is there anyone among you who would ever be in any respect the better for it? the richer, the freer, the happier, the more secure? And is it for a boon like this that you would join in the warfare against the liberties of man in the other hemisphere and put your own in jeopardy? Or is it for the *nominal* privilege of a licensed trade with France that you would abandon your lucrative commerce with Great Britain, Spain, and Portugal and their Asiatic, African, and American dependencies; in a word, with every region of those vast Continents?—that commerce which gives vent to your tobacco, grain, flour, cotton; in short, to all your native products which are denied a market in France? There are not wanting men so weak as to suppose that their approbation of warlike measures is a proof of personal gallantry, and that opposition to them indicates a want of that spirit which becomes a friend of his country; as if it required more courage and patriotism to join in the acclamation of the day than steadily to oppose oneself to the mad infatuation to which every people and all governments have at some time or other given way. Let the history of Phocion, of Agis and of the DeWitts answer this question.

"My friends do you expect to find those who are now loudest in the clamor for war foremost in the ranks of battle? Or is the honor of this nation indissolubly connected with the political reputation of a few individuals who tell you *they* have gone too far to recede, and that you must pay with *your ruin* the price of their *consistency?*

"My friends I have discharged my duty towards you, lamely and inadequately I know, but to the best of my poor ability.

The destiny of the American people is in their own hands. The net is spread for their destruction. You are enveloped in the toils of French duplicity and, if—which may Heaven in its mercy forbid—you and your posterity are to become hewers of wood and drawers of water to the modern Pharaoh, it shall not be for the want of my best exertions to rescue you from the cruel and abject bondage. This sin, at least, shall not rest upon my soul.

"JOHN RANDOLPH OF ROANOKE.

"May 30th, 1812."

Henry Clay, on the other hand, stung by the criticism of his ruling, resorted to the unusual expedient of defending it in the columns of the *National Intelligencer*, where Randolph followed him up with a crisp, pointed reply in quite his best vein.[1] From that time on, until the two men came to face each other on the duelling field, Randolph was to the high-strung Clay very much what one of the sylvan horse-flies that haunted the woodland roads of Virginia was to one of Randolph's mettlesome thoroughbreds. (*a*)

[1] *A. of C.*, 1811–12, v. 2, 1473 (note).

CHAPTER VIII

Congressional Career (Continued). Habet

In 1813, Randolph was, for the first and last time, defeated as a candidate for the House of Representatives; and his successful opponent was John W. Eppes, who had taken up his residence in Randolph's district several years before. The principal cause of Randolph's defeat was his violent antipathy to the War of 1812; but, as we shall see, he believed that it was partly compassed by secondary influences. If so, it is hardly likely, we should say, that they were of any considerable moment. In 1813, Virginia still clung with an almost pathetic fidelity to the party, which, under the leadership of Jefferson and Madison, had, by adding the havoc of war to the economic paralysis wrought by commercial restrictions, reduced her to a condition of the keenest pecuniary distress. Entrenched in the confidence and affection of the Virginians, as this party was, patriotic as the spirit of Virginia was, powerful as were the individual and journalistic agencies, which had long been consolidating in that state for the purpose of breaking down Randolph's popularity in his District, the wonder is not so much that he should have been defeated as that he should not have been defeated sooner and still more signally. To the reader of these pages his temporary exclusion from public service will, we are sure, prove by no means an unmitigated misfortune. The enforced leisure, which it produced, did not a little, in some respects, to diversify and enrich his life. It afforded him time to

revisit the scenes of his early youth and to engage more actively in the outdoor pastimes in Southside Virginia which bring into prominence the more amiable side of his character; it promoted a closer social intercourse between him and his Southside Virginia and Richmond friends; and, above all, it made him more dependent than ever before upon epistolary correspondence with his intimates for pleasure and relief from *ennui*. Among his correspondents between 1813 and 1815, when he was re-elected to Congress, were Josiah Quincy, the brilliant Federalist member of the House from Massachusetts, with whom he had become very friendly in the House, Francis Scott Key, of Maryland, the distinguished lawyer and the author of our national anthem, *The Star Spangled Banner*, and Dr. John Brockenbrough, a man who seems to have fully deserved the tribute which Garland pays to him in these words:

"To none did he [Randolph] speak or write more unreservedly than to Dr. John Brockenbrough, the President of the Bank of Virginia. No wonder; for his *superior* is not to be found—a man of rare talents, varied learning, large experience in the business of life, refined manners, delicate sensibility, a perfect gentleman and a faithful friend."[1]

The following letter from Randolph to Key gives us some insight into the manner in which the former accepted his defeat:

"ROANOKE, May 10, 1813.

"DEAR FRANK:—For so, without ceremony, permit me to call you. Among the few causes that I find for regret at my dismissal from public life, there is none in comparison with the reflection that it has separated me—perhaps forever—from some who have a strong hold on my esteem and on my affections. It would indeed have been gratifying to me to see once more yourself, Mr. Meade [Rev. Wm. Meade, of Virginia], Ridgely [Andrew Sterrett Ridgely], and some few others; and

[1] Garland, v. 2, 10.

the thought that this may never be is the only one that infuses any thing of bitterness into what may be termed my disappointment, if a man can be said to be disappointed when things happen according to his expectations. On every other account, I have cause of self-congratulation at being disenthralled from a servitude at once irksome and degrading. The grapes are *not* sour—you know the manner in which you always combated my wish to retire. Although I have not, like you, the spirit of a martyr, yet I could not but allow great force to your representations. To say the truth, a mere sense of my duty alone might have been insufficient to restrain me from indulging the very strong inclination which I have felt for many years to return to private life. It is now gratified in a way that takes from me every shadow of blame. No man can reproach me with the desertion of my friends, or the abandonment of my post in a time of danger and of trial. 'I have fought the good fight, I have kept the faith.' I owe the public nothing; my friends, indeed, are entitled to everything at my hands; but I have received my discharge, not indeed *honestam dimissionem*, but passable enough, as times go, when delicacy is not over-fastidious. I am again free, as it respects the public at least, and have but one more victory to achieve to be so in the true sense of the word. Like yourself and Mr. Meade, I cannot be contented with endeavoring to do good for goodness' sake, or rather for the sake of the Author of all goodness. In spite of me, I cannot help feeling something very like contempt for my poor foolish fellow-mortals, and would often consign them to Bonaparte in this world, and the devil, his master, in the next; but these are but temporary fits of misanthropy, which soon give way to better and juster feelings."[1]

Another letter to Key, written shortly after this one, prolongs the same strain of reflection:

"ROANOKE, May 22, 1813.

"MY DEAR FRIEND:—Your letter being addressed to Farmville, did not reach me until yesterday, when my nephew brought it up. *Charlotte Court House* is my post-office. By

[1] Garland, v. 2, 11.

my last you will perceive that I have anticipated your kind office in regard to my books and papers at Crawford's. Pray give them protection 'until the Chesapeake shall be fit for service.' It is, I think, nearly eight years since I ventured to play upon those words in a report of the Secretary of the Navy. I have read your letter again and again, and cannot express to you how much pleasure the perusal has given me.

"I had taken so strong a disgust against public business, conducted as it has been for years past, that I doubt my fitness for the situation from which I have been dismissed. The House of R. was as odious to me as ever school-room was to a truant boy. To be under the dominion of such wretches as (with a few exceptions) composed the majority, was intolerably irksome to my feelings; and, although my present situation is far from enviable, I feel the value of the exchange. Today, for the first time, we have warm weather; and, as I enjoy the breeze in my cool cabin, where there is scarce a fly to be seen, I think with loathing of that 'compound of villainous smells' which at all times exhale through the H. of R., but which, in a summer session, are absolutely pestilential. Many of those, too, whose society lessened the labors of our vocation, are gone; Bleecker, Elliott, Quincy, Baker, and (since) Bayard; so that I should find myself in Congress among enemies or strangers. Breckenridge, Stanford, and Ridgely, and Lloyd in the Senate are left; and I am glad that they are not in a minority, so forlorn as the last. They have my best wishes—all the aid that I shall ever give to the public cause. The great master of political philosophy has said that 'mankind has no title to demand that we should serve them in spite of themselves.' It is not upon this plea, however, that I shall stand aloof from the bedside of my delirious country. My course is run. I acquiesce in the decision that has been passed against me, and seek neither for appeal nor new trial.

"I shall not go northwards until towards the autumn, when I must visit Philadelphia. My late friend Clay's youngest son will return with me; and, that journey over, I shall probably never cross James River again.

"You are mistaken in supposing that 'we Virginians like the war better the nearer it approaches us'; so far from it, there is

a great change in the temper of this State, and even in this district, paradoxical as it may seem, against the war. More than half of those who voted against me, were persuaded that I was the *cause* of the war; that the Government wished for peace (e.g. the Russian Embassy), but that I thwarted them in everything, and that, without unanimity amongst ourselves, peace could not be obtained. If you are acquainted with Daschoff, tell him that the Russian mediation was (strange as it may appear) made the instrument of my ejection. It gave a temporary popularity to the ministry—the people believing that peace was their object. Its effect on the elections generally has been very great. Some were made to believe that the British fleet in the Chesapeake was to aid my election."[1]

A subsequent and briefer letter to Key shows that, averse as Randolph was to the war, he early withheld his approval from the extreme position that the New England Federalists had taken in regard to it:

"May 23d, 1813.

"Your letter of the 14th was received today—many thanks for it. By the same mail, Mr. Quincy sent me a copy of his speech of the 30th of last month. It is a composition of much ability and depth of thought; but it indicates a spirit and a temper to the North which is more a subject of regret than of surprise. The grievances of Lord North's administration were but as a feather in the scale, when compared with those inflicted by Jefferson and Madison."[2]

On the same day that this letter was written, Randolph wrote to Quincy acknowledging the receipt of the copy of his speech which is mentioned in it:

"ROANOKE, May 23, 1813.

"DEAR SIR: You lay me under obligations which I know not how to requite, and yet I cannot help requesting a continuance of them. I have been highly gratified today by the

[1] Garland, v. 2, 12.

[2] *Ibid.*, 14.

receipt of your letter of the 5th, and the accompanying pamphlet. I have read them both with deep attention, and with a melancholy pleasure which I should find it difficult to describe. You are under some misapprehension respecting my opinions in regard to certain men and measures—the true sources of our present calamities. They are not materially, if at all, variant from your own. It is time indeed to speak out; but, if, as I fear, the canine race in New York have returned to their vomit, the voice of truth and of patriotism will be as the voice of one crying in the wilderness. I feel most sensibly the difficulties of our situation, but the question is as to the remedy.

"I had taken the same views (in one respect) of the election in this district that you have done. But, paradoxical as it may appear, I am convinced that the war and its authors are less popular in Virginia than ever, and that the result of the election here was owing to a fortuitous concurrence of events, some of them merely local and personal. The Russian mediation, however, was the great gull-trap. Legion could not believe that the government which accepted it could have any other object in view but peace; and the glory of the Russian victories, which should have called a crimson blush to the cheeks of the tools of Bonaparte, has thrown a false splendor around them, and given them a temporary reprieve from the sentence of public reprobation which impended over them. The incapacity and imbecility of the British Ministry has also contributed to give a false popularity to our own Administration. At the same time, I would not have you expect relief from the *sympathy* of the Southern country, the people of which are prepossessed by the demons of faction and discord with no very favorable opinion of you. And indeed, if our own privations and sufferings fail to open our eyes, you cannot take it unkind that we should continue insensible to the grievances of others 700 miles off. The history of the government of this country, if faithfully written, would sound like romance in the ears of succeeding generations, and be utterly discredited by them. But for this consideration I have sometimes thought that I would undertake the task. The oppression of Lord North's administration was leniency and compassion to

the régime of the last six years. Mankind have ever been the dupes of professions, and imposed upon by names. We fondly thought that we were about to become an exception to the general laws of political philosophy, and our disgrace and punishment is likely to be proportionate to our vanity and presumption."[1]

A few days later, Randolph wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough:

"I can give Mrs. B. no comfort on the subject of her son. For my part, it requires an effort to take an interest in anything; and it seems to me strange that there should be found inducements strong enough to carry on the business of the world. I believe you have given the true solution of this problem by way of corollary from another when you pronounce that free will and necessity are much the same. I used formerly to puzzle myself, as abler men have puzzled others, by speculations on this opprobrium of philosophy. If you have not untied the Gordian knot, you have cut it, which is the approved *methodus medendi* of this disease."[2]

The lassitude that pervades this letter, however, is not so well maintained in Randolph's next letter to Quincy. It is as follows:

"One of my New York papers, received today, contains the answers of the two branches of your Legislature to Governor Strong's excellent address. In these State papers, I think I recognize the pen of an old acquaintance, to whom I have been frequently obliged for the most sound and constitutional expositions of the principle of our heterodite government. I think, too, that, in the same print, I can discern some traces of the less familiar style of another gentleman to whom I beg to be mentioned in terms of the most cordial respect. My nature has become so degenerate and grovelling, during a double apprenticeship to the art, mystery, or craft of politics that for the life of me I cannot envy while I admire and esteem the services which you are both rendering to your country. Neither can I,

[1] *Life of Quincy*, 330. [2] Randolph, June 2, 1813; Garland, v. 2, 15.

by the help of newspaper puffs, patriotic toasts, or Congressional rhetoric work myself up into any serious regret that I am no longer under the abject dominion of Mr. H. Clay and Co. Not that I would be guilty of a contempt, or even insinuate anything in derogation of Kentuckian suavity or courtesy; but, for the soul of me, I cannot be *bona fidely* sorry, as one of their great orators would say, that I am here at home where, like the centurion, I say to one—'go' and he goeth; to another 'Do this' and he doeth it, rather than under the discipline and *orders* of the Calhouns, Grundys, and Seavers.

"You are likely to find in me at once a troublesome and unprofitable correspondent. Far removed from our provincial capital, I can procure nothing, even if it afforded anything of interest to send you, and, as all eyes are upon you, at this time, I must request you to furnish me with such publications as Boston affords; begging you to hold in remembrance that we have here a little school of intelligent freeholders upon whom such things are not thrown away."[1]

This letter also expresses the belief that hundreds who, under the influence of artifice and temporary excitement, had voted against Randolph in the preceding April, had come to deplore the fact; and the same idea reappears in Randolph's next letter to Quincy:

"This day's mail brought me the report of your legislature on the subject of the defence of Boston. The act of Congress, of the 23rd of April, 1808, for arming the militia was, as you know, a bantling of my own nursing. I knew that the brat was hateful to the sight of the stepmothers of the Constitution, and foresaw that they would try to overlay it. I asked for an annual million, and they gave us a beggarly appointment of $200,000.00, the greater part of which they have contrived to embezzle, and the proceeds of the remainder they have distributed amongst their favorites. The terms of the act are imperative; they admit of no discretion; and, if anything in the shape of political effrontery could have surprised me, I should have been astonished at the impudence with which this

[1] Roanoke, June 20, 1813; *Life of Quincy*, 332.

malfeasance and malversation has been not merely palliated but justified on the floor of Congress. Rely upon it that with all the unpromising appearances of the prospect in this quarter, there is a revulsion in the public sentiment. I have washed my hands of politics, but I cannot be insensible of the change which the matchless folly of our rulers is effecting in Virginia, and even in Kentucky, where the men of light and leading are gradually opening their eyes to the sins and fooleries of administration."[1]

The next letter from Randolph to Quincy is interesting, if for no other reason because it reveals the ever present fear of a servile insurrection, which lurked in the heart of a slave community, and yet so rarely justified its existence.

"We are all here in a state of great alarm and distress. The Governor has called for more than one-fourth of our effective men from every county, far and wide. From those nearer the theatre of war, a yet greater proportion has been demanded. The distress and alarm occasioned by this requisition do not arise from *fear* of the prowess of the *enemy*, but of the effects of the *climate* and *water* of the lower country, especially *at this season;* and the danger from *an internal foe*, augmented by the removal of so large a portion of our force. Of the result you can form no conception. 'I have seen more crying,' said an old neighboring freeholder to me this morning, 'since Friday (the 2nd) than I have seen in all my life before.' If the cold-blooded insect whom God for wise purposes has inflicted upon us (Pharaoh was plagued with some of the same species), could have heard the shrieks of agonizing wives that yet ring in my ears. . . . I am persuaded some compunctious visitings of his reptile nature would have knocked at his heart. Perhaps, you do not know that the climate and water of the lower country are *poisonous* to *our* constitutions, and that a stranger, who would go to Norfolk at this *season*, would be reckoned a *mad*, and certainly a *dead*, man. To turn men who have been basking in the shade for two months and never exposed to the sun—to turn such men at a *minute's warning*

[1] Roanoke, June 28, 1813; *Life of Quincy*, 333.

into *soldiers*, and require them to march with a musket on their shoulders and a knapsack and four days provisions at their backs, beneath this torrid sky, is to sign their death warrant. Rely upon it that the working of this campaign is against the faction which has plunged us all unprepared into this disastrous contest. The express, who brought up our executive orders, had not as much money as would pay for the hire of a horse. Twelve shillings, lawful money, would have been enough; instead of which he was furnished with a *power to impress* and actually took the only horse of a *very* poor man in this neighborhood. Things are drawing to a head."[1]

Another letter in the series to Key discloses the ruinous effect that the war was having on the planting interests of Virginia.

"I heartily wish that I were qualified in any shape to advise you on the subject of a new calling in life. Were I Premier, I should certainly translate you to the See of Canterbury; and, if I were not too conscious of my utter incompetency, I should like to take a professorship in some college where you were principal; for, like you, '*my occupation* (tobacco making) *is also gone.*' Some sort of employment is absolutely necessary to keep me from expiring with *ennui*. I 'see no reviews' nor anything else of that description. My time passes in uniform monotony. For weeks together, I never see a new face; and, to tell you the truth, I am of so much of Captain Gulliver's way of thinking respecting my fellow-Yahoos (a few excepted whose souls must have transmigrated from the generous Houyhnhnhms) that I have as much of their company as is agreeable to me; and I suspect that they are pretty much of my opinion: that I am not only *ennuyé* myself but the cause of *ennui* in others. In fact this business of living is, like Mr. Barlow's reclamations on the French Government, *dull work;* and I possess so little of pagan philosophy or of Christian patience as frequently to be driven to the brink of despair. 'The uses of this world have long seemed to me stale, flat and unprofitable'; but I have worried along, like a wornout horse

[1] Roanoke, July 4, 1813; *Life of Quincy*, 333.

in a mail coach by dint of habit and whipcord, and shall at last die in the traces, running the same dull stage day after day.

"When you see Ridgely, commend me to him and his amiable wife. I am really glad to hear that he is quietly at home instead of scampering along the Bay shore or inditing dispatches. Our upper country has slid down upon the lower. Nearly half our people are below the falls. Both my brothers are gone; but I must refer you to a late letter to Stanford for the state of affairs hereabouts. Henry Tucker is in Richmond; Beverley at Norfolk; whence, if he return, he will win his life with the odds against him. . ! .

"Nicholson has luckily shifted his quarters from an exposed to a very safe position, where he may reflect undisturbed on the train of measures which have issued in the present unparalleled state of things. With me, he condemned them at the beginning, but gradually coincided with the views of the Administration. He may live to see the time when he will wish that he had steadily opposed himself to them. I would not give the reflection that, under every circumstance of discouragement, I never faltered or wavered in my opposition to them to be President for life. Nearly eight years ago the *real views and true character* of the executive were disclosed to me, and I made up my mind as to the course which my duty called upon me to follow. I predicted the result which has ensued. The length of time and vast efforts which were required to hunt me down convinced me that the cordial coöperation of a few friends would have saved the Republic. Sallust, I think, says, speaking of the exploits of Rome, '*Egregiam Virtutem paucorum civium cuncta patravisse*'; and, if those, who ought to have put their shoulders to the work, had not made a vain parade of disinterestedness, in returning to private life, all might have been saved. But the delicacy and timidity of some and the versatility of others insured the triumph of the court and the ruin of the country. I know not how I got upon this subject. It is a most unprofitable one."[1]

A letter of somewhat later date from Randolph to Quincy still more pointedly brings home to us the hardships that

[1] Roanoke, July 17, 1813; *Life of Randolph*, by Garland, v. 2, 16.

the war was inflicting upon the planters of Southside Virginia:

"A long time has elapsed since a letter passed between us. Without stopping to inquire who wrote last, I must indulge myself in congratulating you on the late glorious success of the Spanish arms in Biscay, and on the probable expulsion of the French from the Peninsula. This event is pregnant with the most important consequences. It would be impertinent in me to dilate on them to a person of your political knowledge and sagacity, but I cannot forbear naming *one* which touches ourselves more immediately. It may dispose our wretched ministry to a serious endeavor at peace; for it will certainly shake in some degree their blind faith in the fortunes of Bonaparte. From such men little good can be expected under any circumstances; but, should they restore the blessings of peace to the country, it may be the means of averting incalculable mischief. . . .

"I suppose you are apprized of the deadly feud between M. [Monroe] and Armstrong. The partisans of the former keep no terms in speaking of the latter. There is no measure to their obloquy, if a great deal of truth mixed with some falsehood may pass by that name. It is however plain that the cabinet *dare* not displace Armstrong. He is now gone on to 'organized victory' in Canada. What an admirable opportunity for some Villiers to bring another Bayes on the stage. 'Thunder and Lightning by *General* D. R. W.' [David R. Williams.]

"The transactions of the last Congress have certainly weakened in a great degree the confidence of many well meaning people in the administration. I have observed with great pleasure the altered *tone* of the majority. The Hector is entirely laid aside, and they are forced patiently to submit to hear many galling sarcasms and yet more galling truths from the minority who have asserted with a manly spirit their parliamentary rights. The war is so detested hereabouts that the under-spurleathers of the ministry are obliged to encourage their followers with the hope of a speedy peace. Our men in Norfolk are treated most barbarously. The commissariat and

medical staff are upon the worst possible footing; and the *French* and Jews, of whom the trading population is composed, practice the vilest extortion upon their defenders, who, poor fellows! are compelled to sell their pay at 40% discount to obtain necessaries. The whole country, watered by the rivers, which fall into the Chesapeake, is in a state of *paralysis*. We, in this quarter, are sending our wheat to *Fayetteville on Cape Fear River* to exchange it for *salt*, for which we have to pay at home 15 shillings a bushel, lawful money. In short, the distress is general and heavy and I do not see how the people can pay their taxes to both governments. When that operation commences, the discontent, which has been so long smothered by a large portion of the people, will break forth to the consternation of their rulers, whom they will lay upon the shelf with very little ceremony. It is only by obtaining entire control over the press, South and West of Virginia, (as well as in that State) and persuading the country that you and I and some others were the cause of all their difficulties by encouraging the British, that they have been able to support themselves. But this delusion like every other must have an end. They will however find less difficulty in getting up some new imposture than in devising *ways* and *means*.

"You consider yourself in retirement within an hour's ride of the metropolis of New England, whilst I am three days' tedious journey over miserable roads to the only spot in the State that deserves the name of a town [Richmond], and that epithet will hardly apply to its present stagnant and deserted condition. I am indeed *hors du monde* as well as *hors du combat*. It is to be hoped that a very few weeks will restore you to the society of your friends in Boston, whilst I have before me a long and dreary winter interrupted only by the sordid cares of a planter. The variety and vexatious character of these interruptions can only be conceived by him who has been subjected to them. They remind me of Cromwell when he turned farmer at St. Ives; for, without vanity, I may compare myself to what Oliver was *then*, and may with truth declare that my 'mind superior to the low occupations to which I am condemned preys upon itself.' Sometimes I have thought of a certain *mémoire pour servir*, etc.; sometimes of a 'letter.'

Meanwhile, week slips by after week, and month follows month, and nothing is done. One of the blessings of this war is that I can procure none but French paper to write upon and am even glad to get that, wretched as it is."[1]

A letter from Randolph to Key, written about two weeks after this letter, has its value as illustrating how, to recall Chatham's famous simile, even the waters of the Rhone and the Saône will mix at last, however reluctantly, when they find themselves flowing side by side in the same direction; or, to alter the comparison, how not unlike two mutually hostile members of the animal kingdom, brought together on the same islet of refuge by a rising flood, were Randolph, the "Baron of Roanoke," as John Adams called him,[2] and Quincy, Lloyd, and Otis, his New England antitheses, when drawn into sympathetic association with each other by their common detestation of the War of 1812.

"Our postoffice establishment is under shameful mismanagement," Randolph said. "Today, I received a letter from Boston, postmarked Aug. 22nd, and, last week, I got one from the same place, marked Aug. 23rd. I still keep up an intercourse, you see, with the headquarters of good principles—for, although I do not dabble in politics, 'I have more regard for these Eastern people *now* than I used to have.' Of the policy of driving the administration into war, I have the same opinion that you quote from the *Quarterly Review*. It was a crooked scheme, and has met its merited fate; but, my dear friend, great allowance is to be made for men under the *régime* of Clay, Grundy, and Co.; and besides a few individuals only are answerable for the consequences of this tortuous policy. The great bulk of the Eastern States are guiltless of the sin. When I consider how much more these people have borne from the pettifoggers of the West than they would submit to from Lord North; and reflect that there is no common tie of interest or of feeling between them and their upstart oppressors, I cannot

[1] Roanoke, Aug. 30, 1813; *Life of Quincy*, 335. [2] *Works*, v. 6, 514.

pronounce them (in this instance at least) to be selfish. Indeed, I should not like them less if they were so. I am becoming selfish myself (when too late) and bitterly regret that I did not practice upon this principle many years ago." (*a*) . . . "My will but *not* poverty consents to my Eastern tour," the letter continues, "our blessed rulers have nearly ruined me, and should the war be protracted much longer I must go into some business, if there be any for which I am fit. My body is wholly worn out, and the intellectual part much shattered. Were I to follow the dictates of prudence, I should convert my estate into money and move northwardly. Whether I shall have firmness and vigor enough to execute such a scheme remains to be seen." "Of the print in question," Randolph further says in this letter, "I think nearly as you do; but it has done a deal of good with some mischief, and, perhaps, in the attempt to do more. How was the last administration overthrown do you suppose? By rejecting proffered service from any quarter? Had the Aurora no agency think you in the work? '*Homo sum*'; man must work with mortal means. Not choosing to use such, I am idle. When Administration call to their aid the refuse of New England in the persons of the ——, and opposition reject the aid [of], or stand aloof from, such high-minded, honorable men as S——, K——, G——, Q——, L——, O——, L——, P——, what can be expected but defeat? It is as if, in the Southern states, the assistance of the whites should be rejected against an adversary that embodied the negroes on his side. Be assured that nothing can be done with effect without union among the parts, however heterogeneous, that compose the opposition. They have time enough to differ among themselves after they shall have put down the common foe; and, if they must quarrel, I would advise them to adjourn the debate to that distant day."[1]

On Sept. 26, 1813, Randolph wrote to Key: "We have today the account of Perry's success on Lake Erie which will add another year to the life of the war."[2]

In a later letter to Key, Randolph's general dis-

[1] Roanoke, Sept. 12, 1813; Garland, v. 2, 20 & 21 (2 places).

[2] Garland, v. 2, 22.

affection does not spare the society of which he was a member.

"When you see Ridgely, present me most affectionately to him and his truly excellent wife. I cannot be *glad* of his defeat, since it seems that the complexion of your legislature depended upon success there or in some county on the eastern shore; but I am convinced that it is best for him and his; and I am inclined to think no worse for the country. How can a foolish spendthrift young man be prevented from ruining himself? How can you appoint a guardian to a people bent on self-destruction? The state of society is radically vicious. It is there, if at all, that the remedy should be applied."[1]

Of a similar tenor was the letter written to Quincy on the day succeeding the date of the one just given.

"The delay in your reply to my last letter is amply compensated by the interesting views which you have given me of a subject, in comparison with which all others of a *public* nature dwindle into insignificance. As far as I can see, I perceive no variance in our opinions. I am not a man to put reliance on paper bulwarks when attacked by cannon and the bayonet. The parchment in the Rolls office, I presume, has undergone no erasures nor interpolations (to ante-date or post-date *it* was unnecessary); but the Constitution is changed. It can never get back to what it was. Old age can as soon resume the freshness and agility of youth. Not, however, that it was ever in my eyes that model of perfection which so many have pronounced it to be. . . . I did not then [in his youth] comprehend why I disliked the new system, but now I know that no such system can be *good*. Governments made after that fashion must have faults of their own, independent of such as are incidental to the nature of the institution, and, perhaps, inseparable from it. (Daniel Lambert measured, when christened, for his wedding suit.) To fit us, they must grow with our growth, and, whilst they stubbornly protect the liberty of the subject against every attack, whether from the *one* or the many, must possess the capacity to adapt them-

[1] Roanoke, Oct. 17, 1813; Garland, v. 2, 26.

selves, *at a minute's warning*, to the unforeseen emergencies of the state. I see nothing of this in our system. I perceive only a bundle of theories (bottomed on an Utopian idea of human excellence) and, in practice, a corruption the most sordid and revolting. We are the first people that ever acquired provinces, either by conquest or purchase (Mr. Blackstone says they are the same), not for us to govern, but that they might *govern us*,—that we might be ruled to our ruin by people bound to us by no common tie of interest or sentiment. But such, whatever may be the incredulity of posterity, is the fact. Match it, if you can, in the savage laws of Lycurgus, or the brutal *castes* of Hindostan.

"I *will* congratulate you on the accession of Austria to the cause of the Allies, although I confess my hopes are not high. Yet I look to the plains of Silesia and the Bohemian mountains for my deliverance from the incubus that has been weighing down my heart for many a long year. . . .

"I have a brother at Norfolk. In the regiment, to which he is attached, three hundred and twenty-four are sick. The hospital holds, by cramming, sixty. The poor creatures are dying like sheep—ragged and without a blanket."[1]

Randolph's next letter to Quincy was written from Richmond, where he had sought an escape from the dreariness of midwinter at Roanoke. It shows that he had awakened to the stimulus which the war was imparting to the industrial energies of New England, and which was the beginning of the radical diversity of economic interests between the North and South that was to create so much sectional controversy and animosity.

"Your valued letter," he wrote, "was forwarded to me, a few days ago, at this place where I have been just a month. But, the night before it arrived, talking over the state of affairs with an old friend, we fell into the same train of thinking with yourself on the consequences of the present war. Without the same minute knowledge which you possess on the subject of New England, we both inferred that the war would eventu-

[1] Roanoke, Oct. 18, 1813; *Life of Quincy*, 337.

ally become less unpopular there from its operating, as an enormous bounty, upon your agriculture and manufactures; and my friend undertook to predict that, by the time *we* sickened of the contest, *you* would support it.

"It is rather more just than generous in you to triumph over us; for be assured our sufferings are extreme. No State in the Confederacy has paid so dearly for the *war whistle* as the Ancient Dominion. Perhaps, you will say, none deserved to pay more severely; but remember that our daughter, Kentucky, has been selling her whiskey and meat and meal and horses, and enjoying the chase of her favorite *red game*, whilst our only source of supply has been a little stale patriotism; and even, in that staple commodity, we are almost driven out of the market by her and her sister States. 'Tis true we drive a little trade in tobacco, which pays for about the hundredth part of the dry goods which we import land-wise from the North. The balance is made up in specie; so that our banks, once the richest in the Union in that important article, are nearly drained of their last dollar, and, so far from being able to lend the State the amount of its quota of the direct tax, they are importuning payment of former advances to the sum of nearly four hundred thousand dollars, when our treasury has not an unappropriated cent. Do you wonder at this, when I state it as a fact that the *straw* of a crop of wheat, near market, is worth more than the *grain!* and that flour, so far from being reckoned a *luxury*, as with you, is purchased by some planters as a cheaper food for their horses and oxen than oats or Indian corn; these last bearing a good price for the consumption of our towns. This relief, however, extends only a few miles around Richmond, Norfolk, and Petersburg.

"It appears to me that, if England can (as she must, if the war continues) succeed in driving the American navigation off the ocean, and destroying the nursery of our seamen (the fishery and coasting-trade), it will not be a bad exchange for Canada, supposing her to lose it. We have been, from the breaking out of the war of the French Revolution to the date of the Embargo (December, 1807), her most formidable commercial rival. Your ships, which once 'vexed every sea,' under-freighting even the penurious Hollander, are, I believe,

not (like their hardy navigators) *long-lived.* Seven years, I think, are threescore and ten to them. The seamen who have left their European masters for our service will sail under the Russian or some other neutral flag. In short, I can see no motive in an able English Administration for making peace with us. My only trust is in their folly—for, thank God, their Castlereaghs and Princes Regent are at least as low in the scale of intellectual beings as our Monroes and Presidents.

"I concur with you most cordially on the subject of this most detestable and unnatural war—not to be matched except by the war of Lord North's government against our liberties; and even that was waged on motives less base than those which prompted the present accursed contest. *That* was a question concerning which honest men might differ. Not so *this.* Mark me, I speak of persons having access to *correct information.* On this subject I am glad to find one righteous man on our side. I mean Frank Key, who says: 'The people of Montreal will enjoy their firesides for this, and I trust for many a, winter. This I suppose is treason, but, as your Patrick Henry said, 'If it be treason, I glory in the name of traitor.! I have never thought of those poor creatures without being reconciled to any disgrace or defeat of our arms!'

"As to the war in Europe, I have sad forebodings, notwithstanding some of my friends, men of much better information than myself, and especially on European affairs, are quite sanguine. Well may the tyrant rely upon his fortune. The ball that destroyed Moreau did him better service than his whole train of artillery besides. I consider that a victory would have been dearly purchased by the Allies at the price of his loss. I seem already to feel 'the wind of that blow which is to prostrate Europe at the feet of the modern Genghiz.'

"By this time you are quietly fixed in your town residence, and I have no doubt return to the *opes et fumum strepitumque Romae* with as much pleasure as you bade them adieu in the spring for your paternal shades. You are not now *procul negotiis,* but you have every other requisite which the poet deems indispensable to happiness; and even *that* is always within your reach. A ride of eight miles buries you in the solitudes of Quincy, whilst I have a weary journey of more

than three days before I can reach my desolate habitation; and, when there, I am shut out from all intercourse with the rest of the world, except through the tedious process of letter-writing."[1]

A letter from Randolph to Key, dated four days later than this letter, was in reply to one from Key, in which the latter agreed with Randolph that the general state of society was radically vicious and that it was there that the remedy was to be applied, and added these words; so true to the benevolent and righteous nature which caused Randolph to speak of Key in his Diary as Benevolus:

"Put down party spirit; stop the corruption of party elections; legislate not for the next election, but for the next century; build Lancaster schools in every hundred and repair our ruined churches; let every country gentleman of worth become a justice of the peace, and show his neighbors what a blessing a benevolent religious man is; and let the retired patriot, who can do nothing else, give his country his prayers, and often in his meditations 'think on her who thinks not for herself'—'*egregia virtus paucorum*,' etc., I often think of your apt quotation."[2]

In his reply, after some requests of Key in regard to his copy of Stephen's *War in Disguise* and his favorite fowling-piece, which he had left behind him at the national Capital, Randolph said:

"You see what great objects fill my mind when the day 'is big with the fate' of the whole race of man. For my part, my fears of the power and arts of France almost overpower the exercise of my judgment. I can see no cause why the world should not be punished now as in the days of Cæsar or Nebuchadnezzar; nor why Bonaparte may not be as good an instrument as either of those tyrants. Endeavoring to turn away my mind from such contemplations, I *try* to submit myself to him whose chastisement is love.

[1] Dec. 11, 1813; *Life of Quincy*, 339. [2] Garland, v. 2, 27.

"'Put down Party spirit!' Put a little *fresh salt* on the sparrow's tail, and you will infallibly catch him. You will put down party spirit when you put down whisky-drinking, and that will be when the Greek calends come. I agree with you perfectly on the subject of the poor, unoffending Canadians. To us they are innocent; and, in the eye of Heaven, we must appear like so many descendants of Cain, seeking to imbrue our hands in our brothers' blood! Suppose England to lose Canada, she gets in exchange for it our whole navigation. We were her great and only commercial rival. We possessed a tonnage, six years ago, greater than that of Great Britain, at the accession of the present king. Greater than any other nation, except our present state, ever owned. Our ships are short-lived, our seamen must have employment; all the foreign seamen, and many of the native, will seek the Russian, or some other neutral, service. We may establish manufactures; but what of that? Those of England want no vent here. Moreover, she well knows that, although peace may be restored, it will be a peace of double duties and restrictions, a 'war in disguise.' In short, I can see no motive in a wise English administration for putting an end to the war. My only trust is in their folly. Lord Castlereagh is not much better than his countryman, with the last syllable of his name, whom you met in the street.

"*Peace or war*, the ruin of this country is inevitable; *we* cannot have manufactures on a great scale. Already our specie is drawn off to pay for domestic manufactures from the middle and eastern States. All the loans, &c. are spent in New York; and, whilst she and Pennsylvania and New England are thriving in the most wonderful manner, with us the straw (near market) of a crop of wheat is worth more than the grain; and we are feeding our horses and oxen with superfine flour, although the crop of Indian corn is superabundant; the flour being the cheaper of the two.

"I heard of our friend, Sterrett Ridgely, by a gentleman who saw him at the races. I cannot regret that he is not compelled to mingle in the throng at Annapolis. Sallust, in that quotation of mine, to which you so frequently refer, speaking of the exploits of the Roman people (surpassed by the Greeks in

eloquence and learning, and by the Gauls in military prowess), declares it to be his opinion, after long and attentive study and observation, that '*egregiam virtutem paucorum civium cuncta patravisse.*' He goes on to add (I wish I had the book before me), '*Sed postquam luxu atque desidia civitas corrupta est, rursus Respublica magnitudine sua vitia sustentabat.*' In like manner, we have seen modern France, by the very force of magnitude and number, support the unutterable vices of her rulers, and bear down all before her. As we cannot be saved by the extraordinary virtue of a few, so neither can we rely upon the height of our power to sustain the incapacity and corruption of our rulers and of the great mass of our people.

"As to Lancaster schools, I am for the *thing*, the *substance* but not the name. It is stolen by a fellow whom I detest. I hope you have abolished his cruel and stupid punishments in your Georgetown Institution. An article in the *Quarterly Review* (I think No. XI) satisfied me that Lancaster was an impostor and a hard-hearted wretch. There is a late review on 'National Education' (in No. XV. I believe) which pleased me very much."[1]

As the war went on, Randolph's aversion to it became almost rabid; as witness the following letter which he wrote to Quincy from Richmond:

"On the subject of the war, I believe there is not a man in the United States who agrees more entirely with you than myself. As the mathematicians say, our opinions *coincide*. The late news from Leipsic has put the despondent Federalists here on the house-tops; and, in another week (perhaps), they will be in the cellar again. For my part, I every day see less and less cause to hope for a restoration of the blessings we once enjoyed; and this opinion is founded at least as much upon the character of the party in opposition as upon that of those who administer, and their adherents who support or *suffer*, the Government. The dictatorship (*as by law established*) has not created half the sensation here as did the fall of sugar from thirty-five to twenty dollars per hundred-weight; or the

[1] Richm., Dec. 15, 1813, Garland. v. 2, 28.

rumor that Mr. King was nominated Minister to the Court of London. All heads here are agog for peace, and, if Messrs. M. and M. give it to us, we shall '*ask no questions*' on the subject of the treasure, *blood*, and *honor* lost in this unnatural and hellish contest.

"My dear sir, with all our sins, it must be allowed that we superabound in the first of Christian and of moral virtues, charity. We are so full of the ass's milk of human kindness, that we shall soon learn to speak of Judas Iscariot as an *unfortunate* man. Such is the language which our *candor* prompts us to apply to Bidwell, Wilkinson, etc., etc.; and Federalists, ay, good Federalists too, do not hesitate to say of our precious rulers that Mr. M. is *now* seriously disposed for *peace* with England! Yet, if perforce they are driven to a cessation of active operations, they will have an armed *truce*,—a peace of restrictive measures,—'a peace like a war.'

"The Continental System is to supply the place of *arms*, as *passion*, according to the crown lawyers, sometimes does in case of treason."[1]

It is amusing to find Randolph in his next letter to Quincy so far in harmony with his own new Federalist views as to be able to rejoice that Harrison Gray Otis, once a stern stickler for national authority, had become a convert to the dogma of State sovereignty.

"I have seen Mr. Otis' motion, and I assure you that no occurrence since the war has made so deep an impression upon me. It has had the like effect upon all seriously-thinking people with whom I have conversed. What a game of round-about has been played since I was initiated into the mysteries of politics! I recollect the time when with Mr. Otis *State-Rights* were as nothing in comparison with the proud prerogative of the Federal government. *Then*, Virginia was building an armory to enable her to resist *Federal usurpation*. You will not infer that I attach the least blame to Mr. Otis; far from it. I rejoice, on the contrary, to see him enlisted on the side of the *liberty of the subject and the rights of the States*. Pray

[1] Richm., Jan. 7, 1814, *Life of Quincy*, 347.

give me some light on the subject of your proceedings. It was always my opinion that Union was the *means* of securing the safety, liberty, and welfare of the confederacy, and not in itself an *end* to which these should be sacrificed. But the question of resistance to any established government is always a question of expediency; and the resort ought never to be had to this last appeal, except in cases where there is reasonable prospect of success, and where the grievance does not admit of palliative or temporizing remedies. The one is a case to be decided by argument, the other by feeling. Verily, Mr. M.'s little finger is thicker than the loins of Lord North."[1]

Randolph's next letter to Quincy is a brief one:

"Certain reports here, to which you cannot be a stranger, have caused much speculation and some uneasiness here. Pray give me a little light respecting the *serious* intentions of the Opposition in Massachusetts. Rash counsels are not always, *if ever*, wise. I trust we shall hold together, and live to reap the fruits of the late glorious events in Europe, on which I cordially congratulate you."[2]

The caution is repeated in another letter to Quincy:

"Many thanks to you, my dear sir, for your information. It is highly interesting. I shall make no comment upon it, except to express a hope that Opposition with you will furnish its enemies with no handle against them. They will be delighted with some tub for the popular whale against the next election. I am informed that Government has no other hope of pecuniary supply except from Boston; and that they confidently rely upon twenty per cent discount countervailing the patriotism of your moneyed men.

"I have just learned that Carlisle College is broken up by a conscription of Messrs. Binns, Duane, and Snyder. I believe this is the triumvirate by which Pennsylvania is governed. What intelligence for a parent, who fondly believes that his son is prosecuting his studies under some reverend divine, to hear

[1] Richm., Jan. 29, 1814, *Life of Quincy*, 349.
[2] Richm., Feb. 8, 1814, *Life of Quincy*, 349.

that he is on the frontiers of Canada, a common soldier, a 'mere machine of murder,' destitute perhaps of the necessaries of life. Thank Heaven *my son* is under the protection of *Governor Strong* and the Legislature of *Old Massachusetts Bay*. Why did you leave out that word *Bay* in your style and title? I like it. It was there in 1775. . . .

"Tobacco has sold here as high as $13.10 per hundred-weight. This gives some relief to the planter; but, on the whole, we are vexed and oppressed in every shape that the *two* governments can devise."[1]

This is, we believe, the last letter that Randolph wrote to Quincy except two very vivid ones which we shall recall later in another connection, but which we pass over now because they have no political interest.

A thrust at Napoleon in a letter from Randolph to Key, is good enough for repetition:

"We are all in a bustle here with the news from Europe," he said. "For my part, I hope that Blunderbuss Castlereagh may succeed in preventing a peace 'which shall confirm to the French Empire an extent of territory France under her kings never knew.' If they permit him to retain the Low Countries and Piedmont, they will act like the sapient commissioner appointed to examine the vaults of the Parliament House, on the alarm of the Gunpowder-Plot, who reported 'that he had discovered seventy-five barrels of gunpowder concealed under fagots; that he had caused fifty to be removed, and hoped the other twenty-five would do no harm.'"[2]

This reminds us of the story told by Randolph on another occasion of a man who said that he would let his gun off by degrees.[3] Some other interesting observations on Napoleon are contained in a letter from him to Dr. Brockenbrough, written some five months later.

[1] Richm., Mar. 1, 1814, *Life of Quincy*, 350.
[2] Richm., Feb. 17, 1814, Garland, v. 2, 31.
[3] *A. of C.*, 1808–9, v. 3, 1464.

"As to peace, I have not a doubt that we shall have it forthwith. Our folks are prepared to say that the pacification of Europe has swept away the *matters in contestation*, as M——, the Secretary of State, has it. All that we see in the Government prints is to reconcile us the better to the terms which they must receive from the enemy. From the time of his flight from Egypt, my opinion of the character of Bonaparte has never changed, except for the worse. I have considered him from that date a coward, and ascribed his success to the deity he worships, Fortune. His insolence and rashness have met their just reward. Had he found an efficient government in France, on his abandonment of his brave companions in arms in Egypt, and returned to Paris, he would have been cashiered for ruining the best appointed armament that ever left an European port. But all was confusion and anarchy at Paris, and, instead of a *coup de fusil*, he was rewarded with a sceptre. He succeeded in throwing the blame of Aboukir on poor Brueys. He could safely talk of 'his orders to the Admiral,' after *L'Orient* had blown up. His Russian and German campaign is another such commentary on his character; it is all of a piece.

"If the allies adhere to their treaty of Chaumont, the peace of Europe will be preserved; but in France, I think, the seeds of disorder must abound. Instead of the triple aristocracy of the Noblesse, the Church, and the Parliaments, I see nothing but janissaries and a divan of ruffians—Algiers on a great scale. Moral causes I see none; and I am well persuaded that these are not created in a day. Matters of inveterate opinion, when once rooted up, are *dead*, never to revive; *other* opinions must succeed them. But I am prosing—uttering a string of common-places that every one can write, and no one can deny. But you brought it on yourself. You expected that I would say something, and I resolved to try. I can bear witness to the fact of Mrs. Brockenbrough's prediction respecting Bonaparte's retirement."[1]

Shortly after this letter was written, the greatest flood in the Staunton River, that had been known for twenty

[1] Roanoke, July 15, 1814, Garland, v. 2, 41.

years, destroyed Randolph's crops of corn and tobacco at Roanoke.

"My whole crop (tobacco and corn)," he said in a letter to Key, "is destroyed by a fresh, the greatest that has been known within twenty years. I fear a famine next summer; for this country, if we had the means of buying, is out of the way of a supply, except by distant land-carriage, and the harvests of Rappahannock &c. cannot be brought up to Richmond by water. The poor slaves, I fear, will suffer dreadfully."[1]

The next day, he wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough:

"I try to forget myself or to obtain some relief from my own thoughts by pouring them out on one who has heretofore lent me perhaps too partial an ear. I have lived to feel that there are 'many things worse than poverty or death'; those bugbears that terrify the great children of the world, and sometimes drive them to eternal ruin. It requires, however, firmer nerves than mine to contemplate, without shrinking, even in prospect, the calamities which await this unhappy district of country—famine and all its concomitant horrors of disease and misery. To add to the picture, a late requisition of militia for Norfolk carries dismay and grief into the bosoms of many families in this country; and, to have a just conception of the scene, it is necessary to be on the spot. This is our court day, when the conscripts are to report themselves, and I purposely abstain from the sight of wretchedness that I cannot relieve."[2]

The call for the conscripts was due to the rapine and destruction inflicted in the summer of 1814 upon riparian towns in Virginia and Maryland, like Hampton and Havre de Grace, by landing-parties from the fleet of the British Admiral, Cochrane. Later, a considerable military force debarked from this fleet on the Patuxent River, pushed across Southern Maryland towards Washington, and, after encountering a feeble resistance at Bladensburg, entered

[1] Roanoke, July 31, 1814, Garland, v. 2, 43.
[2] Roanoke, Aug. 1, 1814, Garland, v. 2, 43.

Washington, and burnt some of the most important of its public buildings. The invasion of Virginia and Maryland was too much even for such an opponent of the war as Randolph, and, as soon as he heard of the sack of Washington, he hastened to Richmond, and tendered his services to the Governor.[1] As he had never had any military experience, his mind might well, under such novel conditions, have reverted to the speech which he had made a short time previously in the House when he had said derisively: "France with an army of a million of men with Bonaparte, Massena and other famous generals having failed in this enterprise [that of conquering the liberty of the sea], some of our famous Colonels are determined to succeed."[2] Randolph, however, was given an assignment as a vidette and duly took to the field. On Sept. 2, 1814, he wrote to Theodore Dudley from Camp Fairfield, Virginia, as follows:

"MY DEAR THEODORE: You may be surprised at not hearing from me. But, first, I lost my horses; secondly, I got a violent bilious complaint, not cholera but cousin-german to it; thirdly, I heard the news of Washington, and, without delay, proceeded hither. I am now under orders to proceed to the brick house forty-two miles on York road just below the confluence of Pamunkey and Mattapony. Should you come down, report yourself to the surgeon-general, Dr. Jones, of Nottoway. But first come to camp and see Watkins Leigh, the governor's aid."[3]

But Randolph was soon released from his military obligations. Finding that the plan of the enemy was to assail Baltimore rather than harass Virginia further, he returned to Richmond, and wrote from that city to Key in these words:

"I have been here ten days, including four spent in reconnoitering the lower country between York and James River,

[1] J. R.'s Diary.
[2] *A. of C.*, 1811–12, v. 1, 711.
[3] *Letters to a Y. R.*, 159.

from the confluence of Mattapony and Pamunkey to the mouth of Chickahominy. You will readily conceive my anxiety on the subject of my friends at Blenheim, the Woodyard, and Alexandria. Thank God! Georgetown is safe. I was in terror for you and yours. Pray, let me hear from you. Tell me something of Sterrett Ridgely, and remember me to him and all who care to remember me. I have witnessed a sad spectacle in my late ride; but I do not wish to depress your spirits. Dudley is at home with St. George. Poor Tudor is ill, very ill, at Mr. Morris' near New York."[1]

Mr. Morris was the celebrated Gouverneur Morris, of New York, the *rédacteur* of the Federal Constitution, and former Minister to France and member of the United States Senate, who, after a long career of gallantry, so audacious that he even notes in his journal, on one occasion, that he had observed "*good dispositions*" in Dolly Madison, the wife of James Madison,[2] had first made Nancy Randolph his house-keeper and then his wife.

After writing to Key on Sept. 8, Randolph remained in Richmond until Oct. 6, 1814.[3] On that day, he received additional intelligence about Tudor's condition, and immediately set out for Morrisania, where Judith Randolph had preceded him, by way of Hooe's Ferry on the Potomac, one of the stage routes of that time.[4] On Oct. 13, he wrote to Theodore Dudley from Baltimore, where he was detained four days by the effects of the fall which he mentions in his letter:

"I have been detained here since Monday by the consequences of an accident that befell me at Port Conway (opposite Port Royal) on Monday morning. At three o'clock, I was roused to set out in the stage. Mistaking in the dark a very steep staircase for a passage, at the end of which I expected to find the descent, walking boldly on, I fell from the top to the

[1] Richm., Sept. 8, 1814, Garland, v. 2, 45.
[2] *Diary and Letters of G. M.*, by Anne Cary Morris, v. 2, 417.
[3] J. R.'s Diary. [4] *Ibid.*

bottom and was taken up senseless. My left shoulder and elbow were severely hurt; also the right ankle. My hat saved my head; which was bruised but not cut. Nevertheless, I persevered, got to Georgetown, and the next day came to this place, where I have been compelled to remain in great pain."[1]

On Oct. 23, Randolph wrote to Theodore Dudley from Morrisania: "After various accidents, one of which had nearly put an end to my unprosperous life, and confined me nearly a week on the road, I reached this place yesterday. Tudor is better; I have hopes of him, if we can get him to Virginia in his present plight."[2] On the same day that this note was written, Randolph left Morrisania for New York, where he was involved in another grave accident, which kept him in that City until Nov. 27.[3] Writing to Theodore Dudley from New York on Nov. 17th, he says:

"On returning from Morrisania on Sunday, the 24th of October, the driver overturned me in Courtlandt Street by driving over a pile of stones, etc., before a new house, unfinished, which nuisance extended more than halfway across a narrow street. I am very seriously injured. The patella is, in itself, unhurt; but the ligaments are very much wrenched, so that a tight bandage alone enables me to hobble from one room to another with the help of a stick. I hope to be able to bear the motion of a carriage by the last of this week. I shall then go to Philadelphia, and hope to see you by the first of next month; assuredly (God willing) before Christmas. I am a poor, miserable cripple, and you are my only support."[4]

While suffering from his bruises in New York, Randolph wrote a savagely criminatory letter to Mrs. Morris, which she met with recrimination equally savage. These two letters will be laid before the reader in a later chapter.

[1] *Letters to a Y. R.*, 161.
[2] *Id.*, 163.
[3] J. R.'s Diary.
[4] *Letters to a Y. R.*, 164.

On Nov. 27th, Randolph left New York[1] for Philadelphia. Here he remained until Jan. 18, 1815, in the enjoyment of social gratifications, to which we shall hereafter have occasion briefly to revert. On Feb. 15th, he was again at Roanoke, after leisurely halts on his homeward journey at various wayside points.[1]

While at Philadelphia, heeding the suggestion that his counsels might do something to check the disposition of Federalist extremists in New England to commit New England to a position of neutrality during the war, or worse, he addressed a letter to James Lloyd, one of the members of the United States Senate from Massachusetts, which he hoped might help to produce that effect. It can still be read with pleasure; for there is a charm of diction, if nothing else, that keeps almost everything that Randolph ever wrote perennially fresh, however marred by his prejudices or intellectual or temperamental deficiencies. (See Appendix, p. 1.)

[1] J. R.'s Diary. [2] *Id.*

CHAPTER IX

Congressional Career (Continued). In Congress Again

As the first enthusiasm of the war subsided, the popular resentment, which Randolph's opposition to it had aroused, subsided too, and, as long before the Congressional election in the spring of 1815 as July 18, 1814, he noted in his Diary that he had been to Prince Edward Court House, and had been solicited to offer for Congress. His constituents became not a little penitent, when the actual events of the war had vindicated, in many respects, the sagacity of his views. Besides, they had been so accustomed to look for pleasure or amusement on their monthly court-days to his eloquent and witty speeches and highly individual peculiarities of appearance and manner that to have him silent for nearly two years was not unlike the sense of deprivation that the inhabitants of a city would experience, if all its playhouses were closed up during the theatrical season. The consequence of it all was that, by Jan. 7, 1815, the popular demand for the restoration of Randolph to his old seat had become so emphatic that he felt warranted in addressing the following letter to one of his adherents:

"You will perceive by the enclosed letter, in case the fact shall have failed to reach you through any other channel, that the enemies whom it has been my lot to make in the discharge of the duties of the station, to which I had been called by the

public suffrage, seem unwilling to allow me even the repose of that retirement, to which, after many baffled efforts, they have succeeded in persuading my late constituents to consign me. I shall not stop to enquire how far such a proceeding be honorable, or even politic, as it regards the views of those, who have allowed themselves to adopt it; although the people, with whom it was once my pride to be connected, must have undergone some strange metamorphosis, not less rapid and disastrous than that which our unhappy country has experienced within the same period of time, if there be one among them that does not see through the motives of those who would entreat them to turn their eyes from the general calamity and shame, and the shameless authors of them, to the faults and indiscretions, real or imputed, of an old, dismissed public servant, whose chief offence in the eyes of his accusers is that, foreseeing mischief, he labored to avert it. Nine years have now elapsed since he raised his voice against the commencement of a system of measures, which, although artfully disguised, were calculated, as he believed, to produce what we have all seen, and are fated long to feel. Had they, who derided what they were then pleased to term his 'mournful vaticinations, the reveries of a heated and disordered imagination,' confided less in their own air-built theories, and taken warning ere it was too late, they might be riding on 'the full tide of successful experiment,' instead of clinging with instinctive and convulsive grasp to the wreck, which themselves have made of public credit, of national honor, of peace, happiness and security, and of faith among men. The very bonds, not only of union between these states, but of society itself are loosened, and we seem 'approaching towards that awful dissolution, the issue of which it is not given to human foresight to scan.' In the virtue, the moderation, the fortitude of the People is (under God) our last resource. Let them ever bear in mind that from their present institutions there is no transition but to military despotism; and that there is none more easy. Anarchy is the chrysalis state of despotism; and to that state have the measures of this government long tended, amidst professions, such as we have heard in France and seen the effects of, of Liberty, Equality, Fraternity. None but the people can forge

their own chains; and to flatter the people and delude them by promises never meant to be performed is the stale but successful practice of the demagogue, as of the seducer in private life.—'Give me only a helve for my axe,' said the woodman in the fable to the tall and stately trees, that spread their proud heads and raised their unlopped arms to the air of heaven. 'Give me an Army,' says the wily politican. It is only to fight the English, to maintain 'Free trade and sailors' rights'; and, dazzled by the 'pride, pomp and circumstance of glorious war,' heedless of the miseries that lurk beneath its splendor, the People have said Amen! Of these the heavy debts and grinding taxes, that follow in its train, are, perhaps, the least. Disease and vice, in new unheard-of forms, spread from the camp throughout society. Not a village, not a neighborhood, hardly a family escapes the infection. The searching miseries of war penetrate even into the hovel of the shivering negro whose tattered blanket and short allowance of salt bear witness to the glories of that administration under which his master is content to live. His master, no doubt some 'Southern Nabob,' some 'Haughty Grandee of Virginia,' the very idea of whose existence disturbs the repose of over-tender consciences, is revelling in luxury which the necessary wants of his wretched bondsmen are stinted to supply. Such is the stuff that dreams are made of! The master, consumed by cares, from which even the miserable African is free, accustomed to the decent comforts of life, is racking his brain for ways and means to satisfy the demands of the taxgatherer. You see the struggle between his pride and his necessity. That ancient relic of better times, on which he bends his vacant eye, must go. It is, itself, the object of a new tax. He can no longer afford to keep it. Moreover, he must find a substitute for his youngest boy called into service. His eldest son has perished in the tentless camp, the bloodless but fatal fields of the fenny country; and even for the cherished resemblance of this favorite child he must pay tribute to Caesar. The tear that starts into his eye, as he adds this item to the inventory of exaction, would serve but to excite a philosophic smile in the 'Grimm' Idol (see the diplomatic Baron's correspondence) of the Levee and its heartless worshippers.

"Such is the condition of the better and more enviable classes of society. There is more than one beneath it. A husband, the sole support of a wife and helpless children; a son, the only stay and comfort of a widowed mother, you have the outline; fill up the picture; for you can do it with a master's hand. We shall then see the patch-work of the cradle and the parti-colored rags of squalid poverty fluttering amidst the ensigns and standards which some cadet for military promotion lays at the feet of our President's lady, on his knees. If, at the price of all this suffering, could be brought back the tone of public sentiment, 'that felt a stain like a wound,' it might be even cheaply purchased; but Othello's occupation's gone. War is now a business of calculation, by which a bankrupt, become contractor, may poison your yeomanry at so much a head, and in two years time subscribe as many hundred thousand dollars 'to the loan'; thus riveting upon the survivors of those whom he has murdered a clear perpetual annuity of twelve thousand a year. This is not all. The professions, to which, for the most part, our finest young men had devoted themselves, having deserted them, just as they were beginning to get forward in life, and upon the faith of their prospects had acquired families; they will have no other resource but a commission in the army. Their poverty but not their will consents; and even this motive will soon learn to assume the garb of patriotism, of public spirit. In a little while, men of all parties will insensibly slide into the support of the Cabal at Washington; will be seen dangling in the ante-chamber of the Secretary of War; dancing attendance for a commission. They, whose opposition to the men in power has been conspicuous, will, for a while, feebly adhere to their old principles; at the same time studiously avoiding every occasion that may call for the assertion of them. But a few months will render them, in the main, very good courtiers; while the younger aspirants after military fame, having no shackles upon them, will be at once thorough Janissaries.

"We shall be divided into two great but very unequal classes; those who pay taxes, and those who receive the proceeds of them. Into the first of these classes, I and mine and all that I love, with a few exceptions, must fall; you, my good friend,

among the rest. I was not born into this order of things, and I never will consent, voluntarily, to become the vassal of a privileged order of military and monied men, by whom, as by a swarm of locusts, the produce of my land is to be devoured, and its possessor consigned to indigence and scorn. He who will not assert his place in society deserves to be trampled under foot. 'Will you not then defend the country?' Will I defend myself?' it might as well be asked. Yes, with my last shilling, with my heart's blood. But you know that this federal army is so far from being raised for our defence that we are obliged to defend it; such portions of it at least as for decency's sake are permitted to remain among us, and even to march to the assistance of our defenceless sister state of Maryland. You know that its object is to provoke in Canada retaliation on the shores and waters of the Chesapeake; that it is a great engine of patronage; that the entrance into the rooms of the Palace leads no longer through the Department of State, but through the avenues of the War Office. No man admires more than I do the gallantry displayed by our officers and soldiers during the last campaign in Upper Canada. But I cannot consent, in my admiration of individuals (some of whom are of my personal and particular acquaintance) to lose sight of those principles of civil liberty, in which I was bred, and in which I mean to die. Of the navy it is unnecessary to speak. The simple record of its deeds is its best eulogism; and its most gallant exploits have been recorded with a modesty that . . . our admiration of the valor by which they have been achieved.

"The course of measures, to which during seven years I had opposed myself in Congress, drew, in the session of 1811–12, to that catastrophe, which I felt it to be my duty to arrest by the best efforts of my understanding. In the exercise of this high constitutional duty—at once a duty and a right—I was arbitrarily silenced on the floor of an assembly calling itself deliberative [and] abusing the once venerated name of an American Congress. Then was the time, as I thought and still do think, for the members of the Opposition to have quitted their seats, and to have abandoned an infuriated conclave to the misrule of their own mad passions; instead of

lending by their presence the countenance of deliberation to an assembly that had ceased to be deliberative. Gentlemen, whose opinions I hold in the utmost deference, thought otherwise. To resign my commission into the hands of those from whom I had received it, was the next step that occurred to me. But I immediately perceived that this act of political suicide would at once gratify my oppressors and injure my constituents who would be thereby deprived of a vote on the great question of war which was soon to come before Congress. My part was taken to remain at my post and calmly await the consequences; leaving the responsibility to those who 'had rushed in where angels might fear to tread.'

"Had I been counsel to the meanest and vilest felon that ever disgraced humanity, I had been heard, as matter of right, before any court in the Union; but I was deputed by more than two thousand freeholders to vindicate their rights at the bar of the House of Representatives. I was silenced, not even on the stale plea of urgency, for there was no business before the House, but by the *sic volo* of one tyro on the floor and the *sic jubeo* of another in the chair. *Stat pro ratione voluntas.* Can we wonder at the depth of misery and shame into which our country is sunk 'when such as these presume to lay their hands upon the ark of her magnificent and awful cause'? Such as these? Yes, such as in comparison with whom even these are 'Solomons in Council and Samsons in the field.'

"To my constituents I made my appeal. The war was declared, the Election supervened, and they disavowed me. In that decision I acquiesced as it became me to do. Good cause as I had to believe that the small apparent majority which had been obtained against me was procured by unfair devices, I moved for no new trial. Without any affected change of my manners, I used none of the means practised by the most honorable men to extend their popularity. I was satisfied with having stood an eight years' siege against the whole power and patronage of Government and the incessant roar of the artillery of the press exclusively devoted to administration. To fall in such a cause was no mean glory. I well knew that it was neither by the prowess nor by the friends of mine adversary that I had been beaten down. I returned nothing loth to the

superintendence of my own affairs (too long neglected) with a clear conscience and clean hands. Business calling me to Prince Edward, July court, I was solicited by a most respectable and numerous body of freeholders of that enlightened county to become a candidate at the ensuing election; friends who had supported me through the good and evil report of fourteen stormy years; towards whom my heart yearned; to whom it was painful in the extreme to deny any thing in my power to grant. My answer was given publicly that there might be no room for misconception or misrepresentation. By that answer, I still abide. It is not I am persuaded yet forgot. I wish it could have been reduced to writing at the time. It would have saved you the trouble of this long and tedious piece of egotism. But, as I am the subject, I know not how to write upon it without mention of myself. Misrepresentations having gone abroad with respect to subsequent declarations which have been imputed to me, I address myself to you as a freeholder of the district, possessing its general confidence, and particularly that of your native county. The precautionary slanders of those out of the district, who have so long taken us into their unholy keeping, would have led me to infer, in the absence of more direct evidence, the existence of a disposition on the part of my late constituents to renew the connexion which so long subsisted between us, and which was dissolved by no act of mine. Since I began this letter, I have been requested in writing by more than one respectable freeholder to state explicitly whether or not 'if the people choose to elect me, I will serve them.' At all times, I should conceive it my duty so to do; but, in the present situation of affairs, nothing short of imperious necessity should withhold my services from the country in any shape that they might be thought useful.

"It were uncandid, however, not to apprize you that my capacity to be of public service is materially impaired. I have heretofore trod the path of public duty, fearless of consequences; secure of that confidence which furnished at once the motive and the means of exertion. Are you not afraid that, when I should seize some state-felon by the throat and drag him to the bar of public justice, I shall be throwing many a homeward look, doubtful of your support? Respect for the

opinions, even for the prejudices of his constituents, a common interest and common feeling with them, are essential to the character of a fit and faithful representative of the People. But none can be more unfit, and, in fact, unfaithful than he who is ever trembling for his influence at home, and, in the general wreck of the state, is alive only to the risk of his own paltry popularity. And this, too, when there is not a single office in the gift of government worth the acceptance of any man of generous ambition or true pride of character. Subject me to what imputations it may, I deliberately assert such to be my opinion. To say nothing of subalterns, the present incumbent has rendered the Presidential velvet not worth the wearing. Alas, poor man! 'Tis lined with thorns for him.

"Amidst all our mortifications and distresses, we have one consolation left; that events in Europe have changed the character of this war; that we are no longer spilling our blood and pouring out our treasure to rivet the chains of a foreign usurper upon the Christian Commonwealth.

"We have another in the manner in which the war has been waged by our enemy, who, envious of the glory of Hull's proclamation, and the burning of York and Newark, has, in his own person, furnished us with a companion in disgrace. To you, among others of my friends, I have often expressed my regret, that the father of political philosophy and his illustrious pupil could not have lived to see the salvation of Europe rescued by the unerring foresight of the one and the unshaken constancy of the other from the vilest bondage ever yet imposed upon man. I figured to myself this awful political patriarch pouring forth his ejaculations and chanting his *Nunc Dimittis* in a strain far different from the reverend Hugh Peters and his disciples of the old Jewry. Short-sighted creature that I am, I now rejoice, for his sake, that he has not lived to see England the sole champion of Jacobinism in Europe; to witness the disgrace of her arms, yet more in victory than defeat. The laurels of Trafalgar and Roncesvalles, surpassing in renown the Paladins of Charlemagne, have been tarnished by men bearing British commissions and boasting that they were pupils of Nelson and Wellington. What would that man 'of ancient character and of modern genius' say to the exploits of his *soi-*

JOHN RANDOLPH

From the copy of the portrait by J. Wood.
Reproduced in Garland's Life.

disant companions in arms at Hampton and Craney-Island and Alexandria and Tappahannock? I can figure to myself nothing so wounding to the noble spirit of such a man (it is a nobility of which the patent is from God) as an unvarnished tale of these and some other transactions of the British forces in the Chesapeake. When I heard that the fleet was passing up the Potomac, the first thought that struck me was that the enemy would land at Mount Vernon; that they would take the body of Washington (it is public property and derelict, scarcely covered by a sort of roof-house on the shore) and transport it to Westminster Abbey; that it would be interred with Marlborough and Chatham (not the commander-in-chief at Walcheren); and that a magnificent monument would announce to future ages that 'there lay the remains of the Founder of the Independence of a Nation that had neither valor to defend his ashes, nor gratitude to afford them a tomb.' Little did I dream that the invaders were more worthily employed in diving into cellars and climbing into garrets after a few hogsheads of inferior tobacco and some barrels of our flour. I sincerely ask their pardon for the gross mistake which I committed respecting their character and rejoice that none of their sable allies had apprised them that beneath the outer shell of wood there is a leaden coffin. The black cloth, all that has not been stripped off by pious pilgrims, as evidence of their devotion, is so decayed by damps as not to tempt the cupidity even of the coloured friends of our invaders. It is equally fortunate that it never occurred to some Trinculo of the fleet that the corpse of Washington, like their own Nelson, 'festering in his shroud,' might be turned to as good account in London as a 'painted fish,' and that 'not a holiday fool in England but would give a piece of silver.' It may not be unnecessary to apprize those accomplished scholars and even some of their superiors at home that this is not the language of an American libel but of a dramatic writer who flourished under an English Queen, the glory of whose reign and the sagacity of whose ministers we are barbarous enough to think not eclipsed by those of the Prince Regent.

"We must sometimes try to force a smile through our griefs, and I confess it does grieve me to the heart to think that the

demon who now haunts the Isle of Elba may (illegible) in the success of one favorite part of his great project—that the seeds of eternal discord are sown between the two great families of the Anglo-Saxon race. England may rest assured that she will find in this nation no contemptible rival, when we shall shake off the present incubus, and that it is not for her, with more than one-third of her subjects excommunicated and exasperated against her, to talk, or to think of, dissolving our union. She counts upon the imbecility of the men at the head of our affairs. They stand like criminals at the foot of the gallows, and, should the reprieve of peace happily arrive, will lose in the joy of their deliverance all sense of the disgrace of their situation.

"I am with very sincere respect and regard, dear sir, your obedient Servant,[1]

"JOHN RANDOLPH OF ROANOKE."

Outspoken as this manly and unrepentant declaration was, it found its way to the hearts of the little body of freeholders mentioned by Randolph in his letter to Quincy, and a few weeks after it was written he was returned to Congress. (*a*)

Sawyer truly says that, when Randolph took his seat in 1815, "he seemed to have gained strength and new vigor by his two years' rustication."[2] For some time, he had been considerably more interested in the subject of religion than in that of politics; and he was in no haste to reassume the seat from which he had been ousted by Eppes. He did not reach the House until the early part of January (*b*), but, when he found himself once more on the floor of Congress, habit reasserted its sway, and he was soon engaging in debate with refreshed interest and unabated force. On his return to Washington, he found that the Republican party had drifted away still further from its old principles than it had done when the Twelfth Congress came to an end. During that Congress, he is reported to

[1] *Richm. Enq.*, Apr. 1, 1815, dated York Buildings, Jan. 7, 1815.
[2] P. 71.

have opened his heart in these words; some of which were destined to be long and widely quoted:

"He feared, if a writ were to issue against that old party, as had been facetiously said in another body of our valiant army, it would be impossible for a constable with a search warrant to find it. There must be a return of *non est inventus*. Death, resignation, and desertion had thinned their ranks. They had disappeared. New men and new doctrines had succeeded."[1]

Now Randolph was to find that the war had operated a still greater change in the former creed of the Republican party. In 1791, the incorporation of a national bank had been opposed by Jefferson and his adherents as unwarranted by the Federal Constitution; and, in 1811, when the charter of the First National Bank expired, the Republicans had defeated the effort to renew it. Now Henry Clay, who had been one of the most active of the Republicans in bringing about this result, was an earnest supporter of a bill introduced by Calhoun, his fellow Republican, "to incorporate the subscribers to the Bank of the United States"—a bill which President Madison signed, when it reached him, though he, too, had previously denied the constitutionality of such a bill. One of the most prominent characteristics of the primitive Republicanism was its jealousy of the taxing power. Now, bulking largely upon the legislative horizon, was the proposition which, in one covert disguise, or under one false pretense or another, was to become so familiar of taxing A. for the benefit of B. through the instrumentality of import duties. Soon to take its place beside it was the once heretical proposition that the Federal government had a right to appropriate money out of the Federal treasury for the purpose of establishing internal improvements within the

[1] *A. of C.*, 1811–12, v. 1, 525.

states. There is evidence that the appearance of Randolph in the Fourteenth Congress was awaited with much curiosity. In January, 1816, after he had taken part for the first time in the discussions of that session, Mr. Cuthbert, of Georgia, said: "When my friend from South Carolina (Mr. Calhoun) yesterday resumed his seat, I felt myself under the influence of a strong impulse to reply, but refrained because I participated in the general anxiety to listen to a gentleman who had recently appeared in this hall."[1] The first debate of this Congress, into which Randolph entered, was one relating to commerce with Great Britain, in which Calhoun also took part. Though Randolph had arrived in Washington only the day before, he spoke with such telling earnestness and power in this debate that, in following him, Mr. Reynolds, of Tennessee, said that he arose with some diffidence to express his opinion on the question then before the House, particularly after the great display made by the gentlemen from South Carolina and Virginia who had just sat down.[2]

Randolph spoke very frequently during the Fourteenth Congress and on a considerable variety of topics, but always with spirit and ability. Once or twice his speeches were accompanied by personal attacks. Thinking that William Pinkney, a new member, for whose talents he soon formed the very highest degree of respect, was a little more at home in the House than a newcomer ought to be, he referred to him in the debate on Commerce with Great Britain as the gentleman from Maryland, and then paused and added doubtingly: "I am told he is from Maryland"[3] —a supercilious stroke of no little audacity when the recent mission of Pinkney to Great Britain and his fame as an advocate are remembered. Upon the termination of Randolph's speech, Pinkney is said to have had the good sense to approach him and to assure him amiably that he was

[1] *A. of C.*, 1815–16, v. 1, 554.
[2] *A. of C.*, 1815–16, v. 1, 542.
[3] *A. of C.*, 1815–16, v. 1, 579.

from Maryland.[1] The act, however, was not so generous as it seemed, for in the same debate Randolph had said that he had listened to Pinkney's argument with very great pleasure as a specimen of the powers of the human mind which he was not often accustomed to witness even in that honorable House.[2] On another occasion, Randolph said that a dilemma, which Forsyth of Georgia had so triumphantly flourished in the face of the House, carried on its horns no terrors for him. The horns reminded him of a circumstance attending a bull-fight of the Portugese in their ancient and better days. The horns of the animal it turned out were covered with leather; they threatened but wounded not; and that, added Randolph, was the case with the horns with which the gentleman had made full butt at him. But very happily Forsyth replied that he regretted that the gentleman from Virginia should suppose that he had come to the House with his horns sharpened to wound him. Whilst he continued a member of the House with the gentleman, all he hoped for was to be able to escape *his* horns.[3] On still another occasion, Randolph derided the bellicose temper towards Spain which Henry Clay, who had recently returned from Ghent, and was again the Speaker of the House, had revealed in the course of a speech to which Randolph was replying. He is reported as saying that the honorable gentleman had been near the field of Waterloo; that he (Randolph) was afraid that he had caught the infection, had snuffed the carnage; and that, when a man once caught that infection, the consequences, as in the case of ambition or avarice, whether taken in the natural way or by inoculation, were permanent.

"What!" said Mr. Randolph, "Increase our standing army in time of peace on the suggestion that we are to go on a cru-

[1] *Thirty Years' View*, by Thos. H. Benton, v. 1, 20. [2] *Ibid.*
[3] Sawyer, 68; *A. of C.*, 1815–16, v. 1, 945.

sade in South America? Do I not understand the gentleman? (The Speaker here intimated a negative to this question.) I am sorry I do not. I labor under two great misfortunes; one is that I can never understand the honorable Speaker; the other is that he can never understand me."[1]

And on still another occasion during the Fourteenth Congress, irritated by the pack of Congressmen, who were snapping and snarling at his heels, because he had stated that he had as lief be caught with his hand in his neighbor's pocket as vote against the Compensation Bill relating to the pay of Congressmen, and yet receive money under it, Randolph was hurried into this felicitous quotation:

> "The little dogs and all,
> Tray, Blanch and Sweetheart,
> See, they bark at me!"

Philip P. Barbour, of Virginia, sternly interrupted the speaker by asking him whether he intended any allusion to him; and pressed his point with a considerable degree of dexterous firmness; but Randolph stood his ground, and declared that an interruption with the pallid face and the tongue of passion was not the sort of interruption that he could acknowledge on the floor of the House.[2]

The bill to incorporate a national bank was obstructed by Randolph at every stage of its passage. At that time, as for many years afterwards, a financial institution under the patronage of the central government and ramifying in its operations throughout the country could be readily distorted by the distrust of State sovereignty into a vast and omnipotent monster of oppression; indeed might readily become one. To many persons then, as Randolph once wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough, the President of the Bank of Virginia, a banking house was a house of ill-fame.[3]

[1] *A. of C.*, 1815–16, v. 1, 728. [2] *Id.*, v. 2, 520.
[3] Washington, Jan. 8, 1829, Mrs. Gilbert S. Meem MSS.

"The proposal to establish this great bank," he said, "is but a crutch, and, so far as I understand it, it is a broken one; it will tend instead of remedying the evil to aggravate it. The evil of the times is a spirit engendered in this republic, fatal to Republican principles; fatal to Republican virtue; a spirit to live by any means but those of honest industry; a spirit of profusion; in other words, the spirit of Cataline himself, *alieni avidus sui profusus;* a spirit of expediency not only in public but in private life; the system of Diddler in the farce, living any way and well; wearing an expensive coat and drinking the finest wines at anybody's expense. This bank, I imagine, Sir, (I am far from ascribing to the gentleman from South Carolina [Mr. Calhoun] any such views) is to a certain extent a modification of the same system. Connected as it is to be with the Government, whenever it goes into operation, a scene will be exhibited on the great theatre of the United States at which I shudder. If we mean to transmit our institutions unimpaired to posterity; if some now living wish to continue to live under the same institutions by which they are now ruled, and, with all its evils, real or imaginary, I presume no man will question that we live under the easiest government on the globe, we must put bounds to the spirit which seeks wealth by every path but the plain and regular path of honest industry and honest fame. . . .

"Let us not disguise the fact, Sir. We think we are living in the better times of the Republic. We deceive ourselves; we are almost in the days of Sylla and Marius; yes, we have almost got down to the time of Jugurtha. It is unpleasant to put oneself in array against a great leading interest in a community, be they a knot of land speculators, paper jobbers, or what not; but, Sir, every man you meet in this House or out of it with some rare exceptions, which only serve to prove the rule, is either a stockholder, president, cashier, clerk, or doorkeeper, runner, engraver, paper-maker or mechanic in some other way to a bank. The gentleman from Pennsylvania may dismiss his fears for the State banks with their one hundred and seventy millions of paper on eighty-two millions of capital. However great the evil of their conduct may be, who is to bell the cat? Who is to take the bull by the horns? You might

as well attack Gibraltar with a pocket pistol as to attempt to punish them. There are very few who dare to speak truth to this mammoth. The banks are so linked together with the business of the world that there are very few men exempt from their influence. The true secret is, the banks are creditors as well as debtors; and, if we were merely debtors to them for the paper in our pockets, they would soon, like Morris & Nicholson, go to jail (figuratively speaking) for having issued more paper than they were able to pay when presented to them. A man has their note for $50.00, perhaps, in his pocket, for which he wants fifty Spanish milled dollars; but they have his note for five thousand in their possession and laugh at his demand. . . .

"The stuff uttered on all hands, and absolutely got by rote by the haberdasher's boys behind the counters in the shops, that the paper now in circulation will buy anything you want as well as gold and silver, is answered by saying that you want to buy silver with it. The present mode of banking goes to demoralize society; it is as much swindling to issue notes with intent not to pay as it is burglary to break open a house. If they are unable to pay, the banks are bankrupts; if able to pay, and will not, they are fraudulent bankrupts; but a man might as well go to Constantinople to preach Christianity as to get up here and preach against the banks. . . . To pass this bill will be like getting rid of the rats by setting fire to the house. Whether any other remedy can be devised I will not undertake to pronounce. The banks have lost all shame and exemplify a beautiful and very just observation of one of the finest writers that men banded together in a common cause will collectively do that at which every individual of the combination would spurn. This observation has been applied to the enormities committed and connived at by the British East India Company; and will equally apply to the modern system of banking and still more to the spirit of party. . . .

"As to establishing this bank to prevent a variation in the rate of exchange of bank paper, you might as well expect to prevent a variation of the wind; you might as well pass an act of Congress (for which if it would be of any good I should certainly vote) to prevent the northwest

wind from blowing in our teeth as we go from the House to our lodgings."[1]

Later in the bank debate, Randolph made this pithy declaration:

"I am the holder of no stock whatever except livestock, and had determined never to own any, but, if this bill passes, I will not only be a stockholder to the utmost of my power, but will advise every man, over whom I have any influence, to do the same; because it is the creation of a great privileged order of the most hateful kind to my feelings, and because I would rather be the master than the slave. If I must have a master, let him be one with epaulets, something that I can fear and respect, something that I can look up to, but not a master with a quill behind his ear."[2]

Looking back some years later to this debate, Randolph, not forgetting the inconsistency in which Madison had been involved, indulged in these interesting reflections:

"I am sorry to say, because I should be the last man in the world to disturb the repose of a venerable man, to whom I wish a quiet end of his honorable life, that all the difficulties under which we have labored, and now labor on this subject [the respective powers of the National and State Governments], have grown out of a fatal admission by one of the late Presidents of the United States, an admission which runs counter to the tenor of his whole political life, and is expressly contradicted by one of the most luminous and able state papers that ever was written, an admission which gave a sanction to the principle that this Government had the power to charter the present colossal bank of the United States: Sir, that act and one other which I will not name bring forcibly home to my mind a train of melancholy reflections on the miserable state of our mortal being:

'In life's last scene what prodigies surprise!
Fears of the brave and follies of the wise,
From Marlborough's eyes the streams of dotage flow;
And Swift expires a driv'ler and a show.'

[1] *A. of C.*, 1815–16, v. 1, 111. [2] *Id.*, 1339.

Such is the state of the case, Sir. It is miserable to think of it, and we have nothing left to us but to weep over it."[1]

And along with these words we might as well place before the reader this bit of kindred retrospection too:

"But the gentleman from New York and some others, who have spoken on this occasion, say, What! shall we be startled by a shadow? Shall we recoil from taking a power clearly within—(what?)—our reach? Shall we not clutch the sceptre, the air-drawn sceptre that invites our hand because of the fears and alarms of the gentleman from Virginia?

"Sir, if I cannot give reason to the Committee, they shall at least have authority. Thomas Jefferson then in the vigor of his intellect was one of the persons who denied the existence of such powers. James Madison was another. He, in that masterly and unrivalled report in the Legislature of Virginia, which is worthy to be the textbook of every American statesman, has settled this question. For me to attempt to add anything to the arguments of that paper would be to attempt to gild refined gold, to paint the lily, to throw a perfume on the violet, to smooth the ice, or add another hue unto the rainbow; in every aspect of it wasteful and ridiculous excess. Neither will I hold up my farthing rushlight to the blaze of that meridian sun. But, Sir, I cannot but deplore, my heart aches when I think of it, that the hand which erected that monument of political wisdom should have signed the act to incorporate the present Bank of the United States."[2]

Among the most important speeches ever delivered by Randolph were those delivered by him during the 14th Congress on the tariff, the slave traffic in the District of Columbia, and the Compensation Bill giving Congressmen a gross sum by way of compensation for their services instead of a *per diem*.

Of the highest significance is the first of these three speeches. Of all the public men of that day, Randolph was the first mercilessly to lay bare the selfish and de-

[1] *A. of C.*, 1823–24, v. 1, 1301. [2] *Id.*, 1304.

moralizing tendencies of the protective system. He saw them when Webster and Calhoun, in complete contradiction of their subsequent interchange of positions, were respectively uttering anti-protective and protective views. Before any other prominent Southern member of Congress, if we are not mistaken, he awoke to the fact, as he expressed it, that the Eastern States of the Union were converting the trident into the distaff; and, with his remarkable capacity for sniffing the future, he realized that this transmutation boded no good to an industrial organization, based exclusively, or all but exclusively, on agriculture. Since the Fourteenth Congress, the leading arguments for and against protection have often been powerfully and eloquently marshalled in and outside of Congress; but some of the former were so crisply and pointedly put by Randolph in the speech which we have just mentioned that his words, badly reported as they are, may be read with interest even today; especially as his servitude as an extensive planter to the industrial establishments of the Northern States endows all his observations on the American system of protection with a peculiar value.

"What," Randolph asked, "do the principles about which such a contest is maintained amount to but a system of bounties to manufacturers, in order to encourage them to do that which, if it be advantageous to do at all, they will do of course for their own sakes; a largess to men to exercise their own customary callings for their own emolument; and Government devising plans and bestowing premiums out of the pockets of the hard working cultivator of the soil to mould the productive labor of the country into a thousand fantastic shapes; barring up all the time, for that perverted purpose, the great, deep, rich stream of our prosperous industry. Such a case, Sir, I agree with the honorable gentleman cannot be fairly brought before this House. It eventuates in this: whether you, as a planter, will consent to be taxed in order to hire another man

to go to work in a shoemaker's shop, or to set up a spinning jenny. For my part, I will not agree to it, even though they should by way of return agree to be taxed to help us to plant tobacco; much less will I agree to pay all and receive nothing for it. No, I will buy where I can get manufactures cheapest; I will not agree to lay a duty on the cultivators of the soil to encourage exotic manufactures; because after all we should only get much worse things at a much higher price, and we, the cultivators of the country, would in the end pay for all. Why do not gentlemen ask us to grant a bounty for the encouragement of making flour? The reason is too plain for me to repeat it; then why pay a man much more than the value for it to work up our own cotton into clothing, when, by selling my raw material, I can get my clothing much better and cheaper from Dacca.

"Sir, I am convinced that it would be impolitic as well as unjust to aggravate the burdens of the People for the purpose of favoring the manufacturers; for this Government created and gave power to Congress to regulate commerce and equalize duties on the whole of the United States, and not to lay a duty but with a steady eye to revenue. With my good will, Sir, there should be none but an *ad valorem* duty on all articles which would prevent the possibility of one interest in the country being sacrificed by the management of taxation to another. What is there in those objects of the honorable gentleman's solicitude to give them a claim to be supported by the earnings of the others? The agriculturists bear the whole brunt of the war and taxation and remain poor while the others run in the ring of pleasure and fatten upon them. The agriculturists not only pay all but fight all while the others run. The manufacturer is the citizen of no place or any place. The agriculturist has his property, his lands, his all, his household gods to defend; and [is] like that meek drudge, the Ox, who does the labor and plows the ground, and then, for his reward, takes the refuse of the farmyard, the blighted blades and the mouldy straw and the mildewed shocks of corn for his support; while the commercial speculators live in opulence, whirling in coaches and indulging in palaces; to use the words of Dr. Johnson, coaches which fly like meteors and palaces which rise like

exhalations. Even without your aid, the agriculturists are no match for them. Alert, vigilant, enterprising and active, the manufacturing interest are collected in masses and ready to associate at a moment's warning for any purpose of general interest to their body. Do but ring the firebell, and you can assemble all the manufacturing interests of Philadelphia in fifteen minutes. Nay, for matter of that, they are always assembled; they are always on the Rialto, and Shylock and Antonio meet there every day as friends, and compare notes, and lay plans and possess in trick and intelligence what, in the goodness of God to them, the others can never possess. It is the choicest bounty to the ox that he cannot play the fox or the tiger; so it is to one of the body of agriculturists that he cannot skip into a coffee-house and shave a note with one hand while with the other he signs a petition to Congress portraying the wrongs and grievances and sufferings he endures, and begging them to relieve him; yet to relieve him out of the pockets of those whose labors have fed and enriched, and whose valor has defended, him. The cultivators, the patient drudges of the other orders of society, are now waiting for your resolution; for on you it depends whether they shall be left further unhurt or be, like those in Europe, reduced *gradatim* and subjected to another squeeze from the hard grasp of power. Sir, I have done."[1]

Of equal significance is Randolph's speech on the slave traffic in the District of Columbia which did honor to his heart as well as to his intellect. It is reported as follows:

"He expressed a wish that some other gentleman had undertaken the business; but, as no one had thought proper to awaken the House to a sense of their concern in it, or to point the finger of scorn at it, he would take upon him the office to do it, and to call upon the House to put a stop to proceedings at that moment carried on under their very noses; proceedings that were a crying sin before God and man; a practice which he said was not surpassed for abomination in any part of the

[1] *A. of C.*, 1815–16, v. 1, 686.

earth; for in no part of it, not even excepting the rivers on the coast of Africa, was there so great and so infamous a slave market as in the metropolis; in the very seat of government of this nation which prided itself on freedom. Before he proceeded further, he fenced himself in against all suspicion of unduly interfering in the very delicate subject of the relation between the slave and his owner; and to that end, he reminded the House that, where a bill was brought in some years before to prevent the prosecution of the African slave trade, he had voted against it, because it professed a principle against which it was the duty of every man of the Southern or slave-holding States to set his face; for it assumed a prerogative to interfere in the right of property between the master and his slave. On account of that opposition, he had been calumniously and falsely held up as one of the advocates of the most nefarious, the most disgraceful and most infernal traffic that had ever stained the annals of the human race. Upon another occasion, too, when a member of that House had taken upon him the lien between slave and master, he had raised his voice against it. He had never directly or indirectly acquiesced in the weak and wailing plans of those who by way of relieving the unfortunate African would throw the States into danger; he would never weaken the form of the contract between the owner and his slave; and he would never deny that the citizens of other States, coming into the slaveholding States, might exercise the right of ownership over the slaves they might purchase; but it was not necessary to that exercise that this city should be made a depot of slaves who were bought either from cruel masters or kidnapped; and, of those who were kidnapped, he said there were two kinds; slaves stolen from their masters and free persons stolen, he might say, from themselves. It was not necessary that we should have here in the very streets of our new metropolis a depot for this nefarious traffic, in comparison with which the traffic from Africa to Charleston or Jamaica was mercy; was virtue. Indeed, there could be no comparison rationally instituted between taking those savages from their native wilds and tearing the civilized, informed negro, habituated to cultivated life, from his master, his friend, his wife, his children or his parents."

Randolph then moved that the Committee of the District of Columbia should be instructed to inquire into the inhuman and illegal traffic in slaves carried on in the District and to devise some speedy means to put a stop to it.[1]

At this point, Henry St. George Tucker, Randolph's brother, the Chairman of the Committee of the District of Columbia, suggested that it would be better to have the resolution referred to a select committee which had been appointed to frame a system of laws for the District, but Randolph was so full of his subject that this suggestion set him aflame again.

"Mr. Randolph expressed his regret," the report says, "that the Honorable gentleman seemed disposed to decline the task, and offered himself to take his share in the enterprise. The object of the resolution, he said, was a more coercive police. He knew that the demands for cotton, tobacco, and, latterly, for sugar created a demand for slaves, and they had a description of people here, like those described by Mungo Park, (only that they are not so humane or honest), white traders, who made this their depot, and sold human beings; and, to verify this charge, and show the audacious villainy of their proceedings, he dwelt upon these words of an advertisement of a sale of negroes: 'No objection to traders bidding.' The increase in the price was the temptation for which their base, hard-hearted masters sold out of their families the negroes who had been raised among them. That very day he had heard a horrible fact from a respectable gentleman, as he came to the House, which he would relate. A poor negro, by hard work and saving of his allowances, had laid by money enough to buy the freedom of his wife and child, and had paid it from time to time into the hands of his master; but the poor fellow died. The transaction was an affair of honor with the master, and, the day after the poor fellow's death, the woman and child were sold. One fact like this spoke volumes. He repeated that, if the honorable chairman of the Committee of the District of Columbia, refused to take upon him the inquiry into this rank

[1] *A. of C.*, 1815–16, v. 1, 1115.

offence, he (Mr. Randolph) would himself be among these people."[1]

Here Tucker protested that the honorable gentleman had misunderstood him, and that he was no less willing than himself to coöperate in the measure. The result was the appointment of a Select Committee of Inquiry of which Randolph was made Chairman.

Highly characteristic of the boldness and freedom from cant and claptrap, which were such prominent features of Randolph's nature, were his speeches on the Compensation Bill that proposed to increase the pay of Congressmen from $6.00 a day to $1500.00 a year; and made its provisions applicable to the Fourteenth Congress, as well as to subsequent Congresses. Viewed in the light of the opulent resources and more liberal temper of our time, the popular resentment excited by this bill is little less than ludicrous. The odium aroused by a vote in its favor cost many a Congressman his seat. Writing in 1896, John Randolph Tucker, the son of Henry St. George Tucker, who voted against the bill, stated that the amount payable to his father under the measure was still standing to his credit on the books of the Federal Treasury.[2] Even Henry Clay, who was among the supporters of the bill, experienced difficulty in breasting the current of general indignation which it set in motion among his backwoods constituents, to whom $1500 a year seemed a princely income.[3]

Randolph did not flinch either while the storm was brewing, or after it had burst. Instead of receiving instructions on this subject from his constituents, he said proudly that he would instruct them; and his only objection to the bill was that it did not make the new compensation $2500.00 instead of $1500.00 a year.[4] Some of his other observations on the bill are racy enough to be quoted at some length as reported.

[1] *A. of C.*, 1815–16, v. 1, 1116.
[2] *Va. Law Register*, v. 1, 1896, No. 11, 799.
[3] *Life*, by Carl Schurz, v. 1, 139.
[4] *A. of C.*, 1815–16, v. 1, 1183.

"Was it wonderful," he asked, "that they should be considered by the people at large in the light of day laborers who worked here for something less than a dollar an hour; for something more perhaps than you have to pay a man for sawing wood! He promised with a solemn assurance of his sincerity in the declaration that his opinion was now, and always had been, that the members of this and the other branch of the Government ought to receive no pay at all. . . . But, if the members were to receive pay, he would have them paid like gentlemen; because members of Congress ought to be gentlemen. They ought to be, and he trusted they were in principle; not merely in their exterior but in their high sense of honor in a character which scorns, which spurns, to do that which is mean and base."[1]

Later, Randolph is reported as further saying:

"What man can live here on $5,000 a year! He may breathe on it, but who can keep a family, rent a house, furnish it and keep an equipage, give and receive entertainments on that annual amount? A five penny bit would be just as adequate to that purpose; both being notoriously incompetent. A man so situated may have no patrimonial estate; he may be *suae fortunae faber*—have sprung from the Lord knows where, and be without resources. If he lives as he ought in his station, the imputation is that he wants money, and must have it; and that he has the means of coming at it directly or indirectly. If he had no other object, he said, in increasing the compensation of the members, if he could thereby compel the State governments to rescue their officers from the situation in which they were placed, he would do it. We have a right, said, he to go into the market and bid against them. When we want a lawyer in an important case, do we go to him who will do our business for fifteen shillings or to the Emmets, the Tazewells, the Pinkneys, the Wickhams? When our personal interest is concerned, we apply to master-workmen, not to those who will job for us at $6.00 per day."[2]

[1] *A. of C.*, 1815–16, v. 1, 1130.
[2] *A. of C.*, 1816–17, v. 1, 1132.

During the Fourteenth Congress, Randolph gave a graceful valedictory salute to James Madison, the retiring President. It is thus reported:

"As he had not been bred an idolater to worship the rising sun, now that the President had no longer power or patronage to bestow, now that 'his orb was sinking temperately to the west,' even he would not be deterred from saying of him that he was a great man; for such he unquestionably was in some respects; and he sincerely wished him all happiness in his retirement; as sincerely as he wished it for himself."[1]

One of the incidents of Randolph's participation in the Fourteenth Congress was a hostile correspondence between him and Daniel Webster. That anyone should have been equal to the hardihood of challenging such an august and self-contained person as that great man recalls the words of Marcellus after Horatio and he had vainly struck at the ghost of Hamlet's father with their partisans:

"We do it wrong, being so majestical,
To offer it the show of violence."

Indeed, as Webster represented a constituency, which, as a whole, would have sternly reprobated the acceptance of a challenge, to conceive of a duel between him and Randolph is about as difficult, to repeat Bismarck's comparison, as to conceive of a war between an elephant and a whale. It will be observed, however, that Webster's reply to Randolph's challenge does not wholly preclude the idea that he was willing under certain conditions to accept such a missive. In concluding his dignified refusal to recognize Randolph's right to challenge him for declining to comply with a demand in the House for an explanation of words of a general nature used by him in opposing a tax on sugar, he made this declaration:

[1] *A. of C.*, 1816–17, v. 2, 804.

"It is enough that I do not feel myself bound at all times and under any circumstances to accept from any man who shall choose to risk his own life an invitation of this sort, although I shall be always prepared to repel in a suitable manner the aggression of any man who may presume upon such a refusal."[1]

And no one familiar with Webster's manly nature can doubt that he would most assuredly have done so. Twenty years afterwards he could afford to speak of the duel in a more jocular way. On Jan. 15, 1836, he wrote to his son Fletcher from Washington: "I understand there is a man here from Missouri; a Colonel S. who means to have a fight with Mr. Benton, and, if Mr. Benton will not have a regular duel, intends to fight him *ex parte*."[2]

The affair between Randolph and Webster was adjusted by their friends at the time, but on several subsequent occasions between 1816 and 1832 it turned over in its grave and caused Webster some annoyance. One of these resuscitations even led on Feb. 20, 1825, to another challenge from Randolph to Webster which was likewise stifled by an adjustment mutually satisfactory to the parties.[3] If the challenge did not worry Webster more than the report of it did Mrs. Webster, he could not have been much concerned. "I have not the least disagreeable apprehension of the truth of the report, my dear husband," she wrote to him, "I neither believe Mr. Randolph would challenge, nor if he did that you would accept."[4] Like some other death-dealing things, separated from the social fetish to which its despotism was due, the duel became an empty menace.

Towards the close of the first session of the 14th Congress, Randolph was seized with a violent illness. Writing

[1] *Life of D. W.*, by Curtis, 2d Ed., N. Y., v. 1, 155.

[2] *Id.*, 155 (note 1).

[3] *Am. Mag. of Hist.*, Jan., 1880, v. 4, 53; *The True Daniel Webster*, by S. G. Fisher, preface, viii.

[4] Mar. 1, 1825, *Letters of D. W.*, by Van Tyne, 564.

about it on Feb. 8, 1817, to Theodore Dudley, he said: "That night [the night on which he had made his valedictory speech in the House] and the next day and night I hung suspended between two worlds, and had a much nearer glimpse than I have ever yet taken of the other."[1] For months after he had recovered from this attack and its sequels sufficiently to reach Roanoke, he was not only in a wretched condition of bodily health at times but in a gravely impaired state of mind besides. In 1819, the flood of general pecuniary loss which passed over the entire country involved him too by reducing to bankruptcy the firm of Tompkins and Murray in Richmond which owed him a considerable sum of money. This sum he had entrusted to it shortly after he had been the guest of one of its members—a fact which drew from him the dry remark that, while his host's wine was supposed to be a gracious gift, it had really cost him about $1,000 a bottle.[2] In 1817, his health was so miserable that he declined to become a candidate for reëlection to Congress. In 1819, however, he was well enough, both corporeally and mentally, again to seek reëlection, and to be reëlected. On his return to Washington, he found that, during his absence, considerable changes had taken place.

"Here," he wrote to a friend on Dec. 21, 1819, "I find myself *isolé* almost as entirely as at Roanoke, for the quiet of which (although I left it without a desire ever to see it again) I have sometimes panted, or rather to escape from the scenes around me. Once the object of proscription, I am become one of indifference to all around me; and, in this respect, I am in no wise worse off than the rest; for, from all that I can see and learn, there are no two persons here that care a single straw for one another. My reception is best by the Old Jacobins *enragés;* next by the Federalists, who have abjured their heresies and reconciled themselves to the true Catholic Church;

[1] Garland, v. 2, 90.
[2] Nathan Loughborough MSS.

worst of all by the old minority men, white-washed into courtiers."[1]

If Randolph had only known it, he was really on the eve of a St. Martin's Summer, which was to bring to his political career more of the sunshine of general popularity than had rested upon it since he ceased to be the leader in the House of the Republican Party. In other words, his influence in Congress was about to be strengthened by a period of political rejuvenation which did not end until by his vigilant and powerful championship of State Sovereignty, in connection with the institution of slavery, he had won for himself a measure of influence hardly less great than that which he had enjoyed between 1801 and 1806. But at the beginning of the sessions of 1819 to 1821 Randolph was still thinking in the terms of the old conflict between the Republicans and the Federalists. "The minority men, white-washed courtiers," were the former orthodox Republicans who had gone off with Monroe (the President) when he deserted his and their principles; the Federalists, who had "abjured their heresies and reconciled themselves to the true Church," were the great mass of the Republican Party, including the proselytized Federalists of the old school, whose sober judgment had been bewitched by the martial and enterprising spirit of young "Harry of the West" and the other leaders who had blown our smouldering foreign relations into flame; and the "Old Jacobins *enragés*" were the irreconcilables of the Adams-Jefferson era, who were red with rage at the thought of the general apostasy which had left them to shift for themselves as best they could.

"The spirit of profession and devotion to the court has increased beyond my most sanguine expectations," wrote Randolph to Dr. Brockenbrough on Dec. 30, 1819. "The die is cast; the Emperor is master of the Senate, and, through that

[1] Garland, v. 2, 112.

body, commands the life and property of every man in the Republic! The person who fills the office seems to be almost without a friend. Not so the office itself."[1]

But soon Randolph's attention was completely diverted from reflections like these by the Missouri Question, of which Jefferson wrote to John Holmes: "This momentous question, like a fire-bell in the night, awakened and filled me with terror. I considered it at once as the knell of the Union."[2]

[1] Garland, v. 2, 118.

[2] *Writings* (Mem. Ed.), v. 15, 249.

CHAPTER X

Congressional Career (Continued). Randolph Becomes a Sectional Leader

On Feb. 13, 1819,[1] a bill to enable the people of Missouri to form a State constitution was taken up in the House in Committee of the Whole; whereupon James Tallmadge, of New York, offered an amendment forbidding the further introduction of slavery or involuntary servitude except for crime into Missouri, and providing that all slave children, born within Missouri after its admission into the Union, should be free, but might be held to service until the age of twenty-five years.[2] Afterwards a bill to admit Maine into the Union was also introduced into the House and met with as much obstruction in the Senate, where the slave States had a majority, as the Missouri bill met with in the House, where the free States had a majority. The result was that the fate of each measure became interlocked with that of the other, and one of the angriest and most ominous controversies ever known to Congress was waged over them under a great variety of parliamentary forms until a compromise was finally reached between the two opposing elements in Congress, which provided that the Senate should give up its attempt to blend the Maine and Missouri bills; that Maine should be admitted into the Union; that the House should no longer insist on the exclusion of slavery from Missouri; and that both Houses

[1] *A. of C.*, 1818–19, v. 3, 1166.

[2] *Journals of the H. of R.*, 15th Cong., 2d Sess.

should agree to pass the pending Senate bill which admitted slavery into Missouri, but shut it out from all the rest of the territory ceded by France to the United States north of the 36° 30′ line. Anxiously scanning the stars from his lofty observatory at Monticello, the old astrologer, whose sanguine faith in the mass of men had coaxed so many bright prophecies from their dim depths, wrote to John Holmes in the letter from which we have just quoted: "But this is a reprieve only, not a final sentence. A geographical line coinciding with a marked principle—moral and political—once conceived and held up to the angry passions of man, will not be obliterated; and every new irritation will make it deeper and deeper."

It is to be regretted that the speeches delivered by Randolph in the House, before the compromise was reached, should not have been reported. On one occasion, he spoke more than three hours, and on another more than four.[1] A note in the *Annals of Congress* discloses the fact that on Mar. 29, 1820, he offered a motion that Gales and Seaton, the editors of *The National Intelligencer*, be excluded from the floor of the House as reporters of its proceedings.[2] And it is probable that the bad blood, extravasated in this motion, had existed for sometime before it was made, and is accountable for the fact that Randolph's speeches on the Missouri Question were not reported; though it is possible that they may not have been because the highly excited and sleepless condition in which we know that he was at this time kept him from revising them when presented to him. What Pinkney was in the Senate during the debates on the Missouri Question to the opponents of the Missouri restriction, Randolph was in the House. The influence that he exerted in them is easily read between the lines of a speech made by Henry Clay in 1838. Touching upon a grateful acknowledgment by Calhoun, who was beginning to tread in Randolph's footsteps, of Randolph's

[1] *A. of C.*, 1819–20, v. 2, 1572, 1541. [2] *Id.*, 1695.

uncompromising hostility to the Missouri Compromise, he said:

"I well remember the Compromise Act, and the part taken in that discussion by the distinguished member from Virginia, whose name has been mentioned, and whose death I most sincerely lament. At that time, we were members of the other House. Upon one occasion, during the night session, another member from Virginia, through fatigue and the offensive exhalations from one of the surrounding lamps, fainted in his seat, and was borne to the rear of the Representatives' Hall. Calling someone to the Speaker's chair, I left my place to learn the character and extent of his illness. Returning to the desk, I was met in one of the aisles by Mr. Randolph, to whom I had not spoken for several weeks. 'Ah! Mr. Speaker,' he said, 'I wish you would leave Congress and go to Kentucky. I will follow you there or anywhere else.' I well understood what he meant, for at that time a proposition had been made to the Southern members, and the matter partly discussed by them, of leaving Congress in the possession of the Northern members, and returning home, each to his respective constituents. I told Mr. Randolph that I could not then speak to him about the matter, and requested him to meet me in the Speaker's room early the next morning. With his usual punctuality, he came. We talked over the Compromise Act, he defending his favorite position, and I defending mine. Through the whole, he was unyielding and uncompromising to the last. We parted, shook hands, and promised to be good friends, and I never met him again during the session." "Such," continued Mr. Clay, "was the part Mr. Randolph took in that discussion, and such were his uncompromising feelings of hostility towards the North and all who did not believe with him. *His acts came near shaking this Union to the center and desolating this fair land.* The measures before us now and the unyielding and uncompromising spirit are like them and tend to the same sad and dangerous end—dissolution and desolation, disunion and ruin."[1]

Just when this interview took place, we have no means of knowing; but, if before the following letter from Randolph

[1] *Reminiscences of Ben. Perley Poore*, 210.

to Dr. Brockenbrough, the handclasp mentioned by Clay certainly could not have been warmed by much genuine cordiality.

"The anniversary of Washington's birthday," wrote Randolph, "will be a memorable day in the history of my life, if indeed any history shall be attached to it. Yesterday, I spoke four hours and a half to as attentive an audience as ever listened to a public speaker. Every eye was riveted upon me, save one, and that was sedulously and affectedly turned away. The ears, however, were drinking up the words as those of the royal Dane imbibed 'the juice of cursed hebenon,' though not, like his, unconscious of the leprous distilment; as I could plainly perceive by the play of the muscles of the face, and the coming and going of the color, and the petty agitation of the whole man, like the affected fidget and flirt of the fan, whereby a veteran coquette endeavors to hide her chagrin from the spectators of her mortification.

"This person was no other than Mr. Speaker himself, the only man in the House to whose attention I had a right. He left the chair, called *Cobb* to it, paced the lobby at the back of it in great agitation, resumed, read MSS, newspapers, printed documents on the table (*i.e.* affected to read them), beckoned the attendants, took snuff, looked at his shoe-buckles, at his ruffles, towards the other side of the House, everywhere but at me. I had mentioned to him as delicately as I could that, being unable to catch his eye, I had been obliged (against my will, and what I thought the rule of order and decorum in debate) to look elsewhere for support. This *apology* I expected would call him to a sense of what was due to himself and his station as well as to me; but it had none effect. At last, when you might have heard a pin drop upon the carpet, he beckoned one of the attendants and began whispering to the lad (I believe to fetch his snuff-box). 'Fooled to the top of my bent,' I 'checked in mid volley' and said: 'The rules of this House, Sir, require, and properly require, every member, when he speaks, to address himself respectfully to Mr. Speaker; to that rule, which would seem to imply a correlative duty of respectful attention on the part of the Chair, I always adhere;

never seeking for attention in the countenances of the members, much less of the spectators and auditors in the lobby or the gallery: as, however, I find the Chair resolutely bent on not attending to me, I shall take my seat'; which I did accordingly. The chastisement was so deserved, so studiously provoked, that it was not in my nature to forego inflicting it. Like 'Worcester's rebellion, *it lay in my way and I* found it.'

"He replied in a subdued tone of voice, and with a manner quite changed from his usual petulance and arrogance (for it is generally one or t'other, sometimes both) (*a*) 'that he had paid all possible attention' &c., which was not true, in fact; for, from the time that I entered upon the subject of his conduct in relation to the bank in 1811 (renewal of old charter), and in 1816 (the new bank), and on internal improvements, &c., (quoting his words in his last speech, that 'this was a limited, *cautiously restricted* government') and held up the 'Compromise' in its true colors, he never once glanced his eye upon me but to withdraw it, as if he had seen a basilisk.

"Some of the pretenders to the throne, if not the present incumbent, will hold me from that day forth in cherished remembrance. I have not yet done, however, with the Pope or the pretenders. Their name is legion. . . .

"Remember me kindly to all friends; respectfully to Mr. Roane [Judge Spencer Roane of Virginia]. Tell him that I have fulfilled his injunction, and I trust proved myself 'a zealous, and consistent, and (I wish I could add) *able*, defender of State Rights.' I have yet to settle with the Supreme Court. . . ."[1]

When the Compromise was finally adopted, such good feeling as had been created by the interview between Clay and Randolph was dissipated by an incident which was certainly well calculated to spring a temper much less responsive to touch than Randolph's. It has been narrated by Randolph in his own graphic fashion; but at too great length to permit repetition in this place. On the night that the Compromise Bill was enacted, Randolph,

[1] Feb. 23, 1820, Garland, v. 2, 131.

"determined" (to use his own words) "to cavil on the *ninetieth* part of a hair, in a matter of sheer right, touching the dearest interests, the life-blood of the Southern States"; but influenced by the fact that the members of the House were in a state of exhaustion, and by the desire of one of his Virginia colleagues, William S. Archer, for a postponement, obtained from the Speaker an assurance that it would be in order to move the reconsideration of the vote on the next day. Relying upon this assurance, Randolph kept back his motion until the next morning; but then, through the clever management of the Speaker, the bill was sent over to the Senate and enacted into law before the House could decide on the motion whether it would reconsider its vote or not.[1]

But the Missouri struggle did not end with the famous compromise law. A convention met in Missouri, and adopted a constitution, containing one section, which forbade the Legislature of Missouri ever to pass a law emancipating slaves without the consent of their masters, and another which made it the duty of the same legislative body to prohibit free negroes and mulattoes from ever entering Missouri under any pretext whatever. When this constitution came before Congress, it precipitated another heated conflict between the House and the Senate on the question as to whether Missouri was or was not a State, and entitled as such to be declared a member of the Union. Finally, the issues involved in the controversy were settled by a second compromise proposed by Henry Clay which provided that Missouri should be admitted on the fundamental condition that nothing in her constitution should ever be construed to authorize the passage of any laws, and that no laws should ever be passed by her, by which any citizen of any State would be deprived of any of the privileges and immunities to which he was entitled under the Constitution of the United States. However,

[1] Garland, v. 2, 128.

before this conclusion was reached, a debate had arisen as to whether the vote that Missouri had cast for Presidential electors should be counted, and, in connection with this question, Randolph made a speech which showed that he had divined no less clearly than Jefferson the portentous significance of the Missouri Compromise.

"You may keep Missouri out of the Union by violence," he said, "but here the issue is joined. She comes forward in the person of her Presidential and Vice Presidential Electors instead of that of her Representative; and she is thus presented in a shape as unquestionable as that of New York, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, or the proudest and oldest State in the Union. She comes forward by her attorneys, her electors. Will you deny them admittance? Will you thrust her electors and her only from this Hall? . . . I made no objection to the votes of New Hampshire, Maine or Vermont. I have had as good a right to object to the votes of New Hampshire as the gentleman from New Hampshire has to object to the votes of Missouri. Who made thee, Cain, thy brother's keeper? Who put Missouri into [the] custody of the honorable gentleman from New Hampshire. The electors of Missouri are as much *homines probi et legales* as the electors of New Hampshire. This is no skirmish, as it has been called. This is the battle when Greek meets Greek; it is a conflict now to be decided between the phalanx and the legion, whether the impenetrability of the one or the activity of the other shall prevail. Let us buckle on our armour; let us put aside all this flummery, these metaphysical distinctions, these legal technicalities, these special pleadings, this dry minuteness, this unprofitable drawing of distinctions without difference; let us say now, as we have said on another occasion, we will assert, maintain and vindicate our rights or put to every hazard what you pretend to hold in such high estimation."[1] (*a*)

One effect of the Missouri controversy and the recovery of popularity, which it brought to Randolph in the South, was to arouse Monroe to the importance of attempting to

[1] *A. of C.*, 1820–21, v. 3, 1160.

regain Randolph's former good will; but his overtures were coldly received.

"The same two single gentlemen rolled into one [a fat member of Congress from Virginia]," Randolph wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough, "told me that M——e expressed a desire to maintain the relations of peace and amity and social intercourse with me; that he did not stand upon etiquette; did not require any gentleman to pay him the respect of a call in the first instance; gave examples to that effect, some of which I know to be true (N. B. election coming on), and that he should have sent his invitations to me as well as to the rest, but that he thought they would not be acceptable; that I had repelled, etc., etc., etc.

"Whereupon I said that I had not seen said great man but once (Friday, the 11th, riding by, after Mr. King's speech in the Senate) since the Georgetown sheep-shearing, in the spring of 1812; that I had called more than once that spring on him and Madame, and *not* at home was the invariable reply; that he had invited Garnett, as it were, out of my own apartment that year, to dine with General Moreau, Lewis and Stanford, the only M. Cs. that lodged there besides myself, and omitted to ask me, who had a great desire to see Moreau; that I lacqueyed the heels of no great man; that I had a very good dinner at home, which I could not eat, although served at an hour that I was used to; and that I was very well, as I was, &c. Hodijah Meade writes Archer that I am becoming popular, even in Amelia Perhaps the great man has heard something to this effect."[1] (*a*)

Other things, besides the olive branch held out to Randolph by Monroe, attested the popular favor which the former's course in the Missouri controversy had acquired for him. In a letter to Dr. Brockenbrough, he said that it gave him great satisfaction to find that the good people of his District were not dissatisfied with it.[2] And, in the

[1] Feb. 26, 1820, Garland, v. 2, 135.
[2] Mar., 1821, Garland, v. 2, 145.

succeeding year, he wrote to the same correspondent: "Like the long waists of our mothers, I really believe I am growing, if not generally, at least somewhat, in fashion."[1]

The next subject of real importance to receive Randolph's attention was the Apportionment Bill, apportioning representatives among the States, in accordance with the recent census of 1820, which had established the fact that Virginia was no longer the most populous of the States. This bill gave rise to more than one suggestion as to the ratio that should exist between representation and numbers. It is enough to say that the committee, to which it was referred, reported 1 to 40,000 as the proper ratio, and that Henry St. George Tucker suggested 38,000. Under the ratio of the committee, Virginia would lose one member; under that of Tucker she would lose none. Randolph, of course, supported the latter, and with such zeal that he wrote to a correspondent: "Yesterday [the day the question was taken], I rose at 3 and today at 2 A.M. I cannot sleep; two bottles of champagne, or a dozen of gas could not have excited me like this Apportionment Bill."[2] Some of his remarks in support of the ratio of 1 to 38,000 are worthy of transcription. "We must take," he is reported to have said, "a number which is convenient for business, and, at the same time, sufficiently great to represent the interests of this great empire. Yes, this empire, he was obliged to say; for the term republic had gone out of fashion. He would warn, not this House,—they stood in no need of it—but the good, easy, susceptible people of this country, against the empiricism in politics, against the delusion that because a government is representative, equally representative, if you will, it must, therefore, be free. Government, to be safe and to be free, must consist of representatives, having a common interest and a common feeling with the represented. . . . In answer to the argument that the first House of Repre-

[1] Jan. 19, 1822, *Id.*, 159.

[2] Garland, v. 2, 161.

sentatives consisted of but sixty-five members, Mr. Randolph said he well remembered that House. He saw it often. That very fact was, he said, to him a serious objection to so small a representation on this floor. The truth is, said he, we came out of the old Constitution, where we were in a chrysalis state, under unhappy auspices. The members of the body, that framed that Constitution, were second in respectability to none. But they had been so long without power, they had so long seen the evils of a government without power, that it begot in them a general disposition to have King Stork substituted for King Log. They organized a Congress, to consist of a small number of members, and what was the consequence? Every one, in the slightest degree conversant with the subject, must know, that, on the first step in any government, depends, in a very great degree, the future character and complexion of that government. What, he repeated, was the consequence of the then limited number of the representative body? Many, very many, all that could be called fundamental laws, were passed by a majority, which, in the aggregate, hardly exceeded the number of the committee which was the other day appointed to bring in the bill now on the table. The case of a State wisely governed by its legislature, that of Connecticut, for example, would be preposterously applied to this Government, representing as it does more than a million of square miles, and more than twenty millions of people, for such would ere long be the amount of our population, if it went on increasing as some predicted. To say that 200 shall be the number of representation, and then to proportion that number among the States, would be putting the cart before the horse; making a suit of clothes for a man and then taking his measure. The number of representatives ought to be sufficient to enable the constituent to maintain with the representative that species of relation without which representative government was as great a cheat as transub-

JOHN RANDOLPH
From an engraving by J. Sartain.
Taken from Garland's Life.

stantiation—he was going to say—but, in respect to a numerous and most respectable class of persons, he would not; but he would say, as any in priest-craft, king-craft, or in another craft, which (as great as is the Diana of the Ephesians) he would not name. When I hear of it as proposed elsewhere to limit the numbers of the representation of the people on this floor, I feel disposed to return the answer of Agesilaus, when the Spartans were asked for their arms, 'Come and take them'! . . . It appeared to be the opinion of some gentlemen, who seemed to think that He who made the world should have consulted them about it, that our population would go on increasing, to such an extent as to exceed the limits of the theory of our representative government. He remembered a case in which it had been seriously proposed, and by a learned man, too, that, inasmuch as one of his brethren was increasing his property in a certain ratio, in the course of time, it would amount by progressive increase, to the value of the whole world, and this man would be the master of the world. These calculations would serve as charades, conundrums, and such matters, calculated to amuse the respectable class (much interested in this matter of population) of old maids and old bachelors, of which he himself was a most unfortunate member. To this objection, that the number of the House would become too great, to this bugbear, it was sufficient to reply that, when the case occurred, it could be provided for. We will not take the physic before we are sick, remembering the old Italian epitaph, 'I was well, I would be better, I took physic, and here I am.'"[1] Later in the discussion, Randolph said that he was in favor of making the House as numerous as the Constitution would permit; always keeping within such a number as would not be inconvenient for the transaction of business. For, in that respect, the legislature of a little Greek or Swiss republic might be as

[1] *A. of C.*, 1821–22. v. 1. 1819. Jan. 28, 1822.

numerous as that of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. The only limit was the capacity to do business in one chamber; and, in his opinion, it was desirable to have as great a number as would keep on this side of a mob.[1]

But there was nothing for Virginia to do but to wrap her faded purple about her wasting figure and meekly to submit her throat to the knife. The ratio was fixed at 1 to 40,000. The bill was passed by a vote of nearly 2 to 1, and, the next day, Randolph unburdened his feelings in this letter to Dr. Brockenbrough:

"I am now down, *abraded*, by long-continued stretch of mind and feeling. We may now cry out 'Ichabod,' for our glory is departed. I made last night my final effort to retrieve our fortunes, and the Virginia delegation (to do them justice, sensible when too late of their error) did what they could to second me. I do them this justice with pleasure. If there was one, I did not note the exception. Had they supported me from the first, we could have carried 38,000 or 38,500. S——e [Smyth] of W—— [Wythe County] got alarmed at my earnest deprecation of the conduct of the majority, of which he was one, and came to me repeatedly, and tried to retrace his steps. So did some others (*i.e.*, 'try back'), but the mischief had gone too far to be remedied. Our fathers have eaten grapes, and my teeth, at least, are set on edge. I am sensible that I have spoken too much, and, perhaps, my friends at a distance may think me more faulty in this respect than they would do, had they been on the spot; for, since my first (also unpublished) opposition to the 'Yazoo' bill, I have never spoken with such effect upon the House, as on Saturday last: and I am certain by their profound attention last night that I lost nothing even with them that divided against me, at least the far greater part of them. If in this I shall find by the representation of others that my self-love has deceived me, I will be more than ever on my guard against that desperately

[1] *A. of C.*, 1821–22, v. 1, 847, Jan. 28, 1822.

wicked and most deceitful of all things, my own heart. I pray you, therefore, not to have the fear of the Archbishop of Granada before your eyes, but tell me truly, if I am mistaken. This you can readily learn through Mr. Ritchie, to whom please show this letter, or through some of our assembly men, or others, who have correspondents here. I do not want to know the source whence your information comes; nor yet am I setting a clap-trap, vain as I am (for vanity I know is imputed to me by my enemies, and I fear (as has been said) that they come nearer the truth of one's character than our friends do), and, sweet as applause is, (Dr. South says of the seekers of praise, that they search for what 'flashes for a moment in the face like lightning, and perhaps, says he, it hurts the man'), I fish for no opinion on the character of my endeavors to render public service, except as regards their too frequent repetition; it is rather to obtain the means of hereafter avoiding censure that this request is made."[1]

A little over two weeks after this letter was written, Randolph, without any opportunity for premeditation, arose and delivered his famous eulogy on William Pinkney, the brilliant advocate.

"I rise," he said, "to announce to the House a fact which I hope will put an end at least for this day to all further jar or collision here or elsewhere among the members of this body. Yes, for this one day at least, let us say, as our first mother said to our first father,

> "'While yet we live, scarce one short hour perhaps,
> Between us two let there be peace.'

I arise to announce to the House the not unlooked for death of a man who filled the first place in the public estimation in the first profession, in that estimation, in this, or in any other country. We have been talking of General Jackson, and a greater man than him is not here but gone forever! I allude, Sir, to the boast of Maryland and the pride of the United States—the pride of all of us, and particularly the pride and

[1] Feb. 7, 1822, Garland, v. 2, 168.

ornament of the profession, of which you, Mr. Speaker [Philip P. Barbour], are a member, and an eminent one. He was a man with whom I lived, when a member of this House, and a new one too; and ever since he left it for the other—I speak it with pride—in habits not merely negatively friendly, but of kindness and cordiality. The last time that I saw him was on Saturday, the last Saturday but one, in the pride of life and full possession and vigor of all his faculties, in that lobby. He is now gone to his account (for as the tree falls so it must lie), where we must all go—where I must very soon go, and, by the same road, too—the course of nature; and where all of us, put off the evil day as long as we may, must also soon go. For what is the past but as a span; and which of us can look forward to as many years as we have lived? The last act of intercourse between us was an act, the recollection of which I would not be without for all the offices that all the men of the United States have filled or ever shall fill. He had, indeed, his faults, foibles, I should rather say, and, Sir, who is without them? Let such, and such only, cast the first stone. And these foibles, faults, if you will, which everybody could see, because everybody is clear-sighted in regard to the faults and foibles of others, he, I have no doubt, would have been the first to acknowledge, on a proper representation of them. Everything now is hidden to us; not, God forbid, that utter darkness rests upon the grave, which, hideous as it is, is lighted, cheered, and warmed by fire from heaven; not the impious fire, fabled to be stolen from Heaven by the heathen, but by the Spirit of the living God, whom we all profess to worship, and whom I hope we shall spend the remainder of this day in worshipping; not with mouth-honor, but in our hearts, in spirit and in truth; that it may not be said of us also: 'This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.' Yes, it is just so; he is gone. I will not say that our loss is irreparable, because such a man as *has* existed may exist again. There has been a Homer, there has been a Shakespeare, there has been a Milton, there has been a Newton. There *may* then be another Pinkney, but there is now none. And it was to announce this event I have risen. I am almost inclined to be-

lieve in presentiments. I have been *all* along as well assured of the fatal termination of that disease, with which he was afflicted, as I am now; and I have dragged my weary limbs before sunrise to the door of his sick chamber (for I would not intrude upon the sacred sorrow of his family) almost every morning since his illness. From the first, I had almost no hope."[1]

Nothing was wanting to the completeness of this eulogy as a specimen of mortuary eloquence except the actual decease of Pinkney, who was still living; though he died shortly afterwards. In announcing his death prematurely, Randolph relied upon information which had been given to him a moment before by a Justice of the Supreme Court, who said that it had been given to him by a member of the bar, who had told him that he had seen the corpse.[2] Shortly afterwards, when Pinkney had saved the honor of elegiac eloquence by really dying, Randolph wrote of him in these terms to a friend:

"Mr. Pinkney breathed his last about 12 o'clock (midnight). The void cannot be filled. I have not slept, on an average, two hours, for the last six days. I have been at his lodgings, more than half a mile west of mine, every day, by sunrise—often before—and this morning before daybreak. I heard from him last night at ten, and sat up (which I have not done before for six weeks) until the very hour that he expired. He died literally in harness. To his exertions in the Dudley cause, and his hard training to meet Tazewell in the Cochineal Case, as 'tis called, may be fairly ascribed his death. The void will never be filled that he has left. Tazewell is second to no man that ever breathed; but he has taken almost as much pains to hide his light under a bushel as P. did to set his on a hill. He and the Great Lord Chief are in that *par nobile;* but Tazewell, in point of reputation, is far [behind] both Pinkney and Marshall."[3] (*a*)

[1] *A. of C.*, 1821–22, v. 1, 1147.
[2] Garland, v. 2, 169.
[3] *Id.*, 170.

In an entry in his Diary, relating to Pinkney's death, Randolph spoke of him as "the unrivalled advocate."

Shortly after the delivery of his eulogy on Pinkney, Randolph embarked on his first voyage to Europe, waving his hand, as he left our shores, in this brief address to his constituents:

"My friends, for such indeed you have proved yourselves to be, through good and through evil report, I throw myself on your indulgence, to which I have never yet appealed in vain. It is now just five years since the state of my health reluctantly compelled me to resist your solicitations (backed by my own wishes) to offer my services to your suffrages. The recurrence of a similar calamity obliges me to retire for a while from the field of duty.

"Should the mild climate of France and the change of air restore my health, you will again find me a candidate for your independent suffrages at the next election (1823).

"I have an especial desire to be in that Congress, which will decide (probably by indirection) the character of the executive government of the Confederation for, at least, four years—perhaps forever; since now, for the first time since the institution of this government, we have presented to the people the army candidate for the Presidency, in the person of him who, judging from present appearances, will receive the support of the Bank of the United States also. This is an union of the purse and sword, with a vengeance; one which even the sagacity of Patrick Henry never anticipated, in this shape at least. Let the people look to it, or they are lost forever. They will fall into that gulf, which, under the artificial military and paper systems of Europe, divides Dives from Lazarus, and grows daily and hourly broader, deeper, and more appalling. To this state of things we are rapidly approaching, under an administration, the head of which sits an *incubus* upon the State, while the lieutenants of this new Mayor of the palace are already contending for the succession; and their retainers and adherents are with difficulty kept from coming to blows, even on the floor of Congress. We are arrived at that pitch of degeneracy when the mere lust of power, the retention of place

and patronage, can prevail not only over every consideration of public duty but stifle the suggestions of personal honor, which even the ministers of the decayed governments of Europe have not yet learned entirely to disregard."[1]

The ship on which Randolph crossed the Atlantic was the *Amity*, Captain Maxwell, and one of his fellow-passengers was Jacob Harvey, a resident of New York, but an Irishman by birth, who has left us a series of agreeable reminiscences of his intercourse with Randolph on the voyage, and after they landed in England, to which we shall freely resort hereafter. For the present, we shall merely bring to the attention of the reader portions of two letters which Randolph wrote to his niece, Elizabeth T. Coalter, shortly after he arrived on the other side of the Atlantic, and to several incidents of a public nature which occurred while he was abroad. This is a part of the first of the two letters:

"My Dear Bet: On Saturday, I had the pleasure to receive your letter of the 10th of last month; and a great one it was; for, altho' I took somewhat of a French leave of you, I do assure you, my dear, that 'my thoughts, too, were with you on the ocean.' Among my treasures, I brought a packet containing all the letters I have ever received from you; and the reading over these, and talking of you to a young Irish gentleman, whose acquaintance I happened to make on board the steamboat, was the chief solace of my voyage. It was a short one, although a part of it was somewhat boisterous, and the press of sail carried by our ships (the packets more especially), when those of other nations are under reefed and double-reefed topsails, exposes them to greater danger, while it shortens their voyage; and yet such is the skill of our seamen that insurance is no higher upon our bottoms than upon European ones. Indeed, our voyages reminded me of our tobacco crop. You see I can't 'sink the tailor.' The vessel is out so short a time that she avoids many dangers to which dull sailers are exposed.

[1] Mar. 16, 1822, Garland, v. 2, 171.

"We made the coast of Ireland at noon on Good Friday, and, at twelve, on the following night, we were safe in the Regent's Dock, in Liverpool. When you consider that we had to come the North Passage (that is, between the coast of Ireland and Scotland), and, crooked as our path was, to go out of our way to Holyhead for a pilot, it was an astonishing run. The first land we made in Ireland was Runardallah (liquid *n*, as in Spanish), or the Bloody Foreland, bearing on our lee (starboard), bore S.E.E. 6 leagues—an ominous name. Falconer's beautiful poem, *The Shipwreck*, will render you mistress of the sea-phrases. The coast of Donegal, far as the eye can reach, is lonely, desolate, and naked; not a tree to be seen, and a single Martello tower the only evidence that it was the dwelling-place of man. Not even a sail was in sight; and I felt a sensation of sadness and desolation, for we seemed more forsaken and abandoned than when surrounded only by the world of waters. This is the coast to which our honest American (naturalized) merchants smuggle tobacco, when piracy under Arligan colors or the slave-trade is dull. Tory Island rises, like the ruins of some gigantic castle, out of the sea. I presume that it is basaltic, like the Giant's Causeway, of which we could not get a distinct view; but Fairhead amply compensated us. I must not forget, however, the beautiful, revolving light of Ennistra Hull, which, at regular intervals of time, broke upon us like a brilliant meteor, and then died away; while that on the Mull of Cantire (mistaken by our captain, who had never gone the North Passage before, for Rachlin, or Rahery, as the Irish call it) was barely visible. It is a fixed light, and a very bad one. After passing Fairhead, I 'turned in,' and was called up at dawn to see Ailsa Craig, which our captain maintained would be too far distant to be seen in our course, while I as stoutly declared we must see it if we had light. And here, by the way, my dear, I found my knowledge of geography always gave me the advantage over my companions, and rendered every object doubly interesting. The Irish Channel swarmed with shipping, and, as we 'neared' the Isle of Man, and her Calf, I looked out for Dirck Hatteraick and his lugger. We hugged the Irish shore; Port Patrick, a nice little white town on our right; but the green hills of

Erin were as 'brown as a berry.' When we came in sight of the entrance into Strangford Lock, I longed to go ashore and see Mrs. Cunningham, at Dundrum. Tell this to my friend Ed. C. [Cunningham], and give my love to Mrs. Ariana, and the whole firm. Holyhead is a fine object; so is the Isle of Anglesea. At the first glance, I recognized the Parry's Mine mountain, with Lord Grosvenor's copper treasures; and Gray's Bard rushed into my mind at the sight of the Carnarvonshire hills, with Snowdon overtopping them all; still, not a tree to be seen. The fields of Man are divided by stone 'march-dykes,' and the houses are without shade, or shelter from the bleak, easterly winds. The floating light off Hoyle-Sands, which we passed with the speed of a race-horse—a strong current and stiff breeze in our favor—was a most striking object. One view of it represented a clergyman preaching by candlelight, the centre light being the head; and the two others gave a lively picture of impassioned gesture of the arms, as they were tossed up and down.

"Although our pilot, and the captain too, declared the thing to be impossible, we did get 'round the rock,' and, passing a forest of masts in the Mersey, were safely moored at quarter-past twelve, in the dock, where ships are put away under lock and key, like books in a book-case.

"After a very sound and refreshing sleep, I rose and went ashore, in search of breakfast; for not a spark of fire, not even a candle or lamp, can be brought into the dock, on any pretext whatsoever. At the landward gate, I stopped, expecting to be searched, but the guard did not even make his appearance; so, on I passed, with little Jem, a wicked dog of a cabin-boy, carrying my bundle, to the King's Arms, in Castle Street; but I had hardly commenced my breakfast, when the *femme d'affaires*, in the person of a strapping Welsh wench, who had tried before to put me up two pairs of stairs, entered the room, and with well dissembled dismay, 'begged my pardon, but the room was engaged' (it was the best in the house) for the 'Lord Bishop of the Isle of Man, and the—the—Dean of—of Canterbury.' Here again my knowledge of England, to say nothing of innkeepers, stood me in good stead. I coolly replied that they would hardly arrive before I had finished breakfast, and

requested to see her master or mistress, as the case might be. 'Mrs. Jones was sick,' but 'her niece would wait on me.' She came in the person of a pretty, young married woman; and now the tale varied to 'the room being engaged for a family daily expected.' 'The name?' 'The name had not been given, was very sorry for the mistake,' etc. 'Mistakes, madam, must be rectified; as soon as this nameless family arrives, I will make my bow and give up the parlor.' 'Very handsome, and very genteel, and a thousand thanks,' and a courtesy at every word. Next day, the arrival of a regiment from Ireland unlocked the whole mystery. The room was wanted for the officers. And here, my dear, I am sorry to say that, except by cross-examination, I have not obtained a word of truth from any of the lower orders in this country. I think that, in this respect, as well as in honesty, our slaves greatly excel them. In urbanity, they are also far superior. Now, don't you tell this to any body, not even to your father, but keep the fact to yourself, for a reason that I will communicate to you when I see you; and a very important one it is.

"After receiving every civility from the collector, Mr. Swainson, and from my countrymen, Mr. James King, Mr. Maury, and Mr. Haggerty, and seeing the docks, and the Islington market, I was impatient to leave Liverpool, which bears the impress of trade upon it, and is, of course, as dull as dull can be. The market is of new erection, and, I believe, altogether unique; far surpassing even that of Philadelphia, not only in the arrangement (which is that of a square, roofed, well lighted and unencumbered with carts, and unannoyed by a public street on each side of it), but in the variety and delicacy of its provisions. Here, for the first time, I saw a turbot, and Mr. King bought half a one for our dinner, for which he paid half a guinea. The variety and profusion of the vegetables, and the neat, rosy-cheeked 'Lancashire witches,' that sprinkled them with water to keep them fresh, who were critically clean in their dress and persons, was a most delightful spectacle. Whatever you buy is taken home for you by women whose vocation it is; and Mr. King's house is two miles off, at the beautiful village of Everton, commanding a fine view of the Mersey and the opposite coast of Cheshire. For a full account

of Liverpool, see its 'Picture,' at Roanoke, where you will find, if you have them not, the other books referred to in this letter; and I shall write, by this Packet, to Leigh, to send them to you. The packets sail with the punctuality of stage-coaches, and arrive almost as regularly. The *Albion* formed the first and most melancholy exception. We were long kept in painful suspense respecting the names of the passengers. I was afraid that my unfortunate friend, Tuboeuf, was one of the 'five Frenchmen.' The Mr. Clark and lady I take for granted is an old acquaintance, George Clark, of Albany, son of a former royal governor of New York, and a man of very large estate, returning with his wife to England, after fifteen or twenty years' absence. Dupont may be another very old acquaintance, whom I knew thirty-four years ago in New York, and saw in Charleston in 1796, and a few months ago in Washington. His name is Victor Dupont, son of D—— de Nemours, and brother of Irénée D. They have a large powder and woollen manufactory on the Brandywine, in Delaware. Tuboeuf, I see, had not left the U. S. Both he and Dupont told me they were about to cross the Atlantic. The history of the former is the 'romance of real life.' In education and feeling, he is more than half a Virginian. His father was killed by the Indians, when he was a child, and he knows the rifle, hunting-shirt and moccasins. His father was the friend of my near and dear relative, Jack Banister, of Battersea. When Tuboeuf l'âiné arrived at City Point, he found his young friend had been dead several years. This connection determined him to Virginia, and he went out to the Holston country, where he was killed, and where the son lived until manhood. But I shall never get off from Liverpool.

"On Wednesday morning, April 10th, I set out alone, in a post-chaise; and now you must take an extract from my 'log-book.'"[1]

Here follows a long series of journal entries ending with the words "*caetera desunt*"; but we shall limit ourselves to an extract or so from them which shed some little light on Randolph's personal character:

[1] London, May 27, 1822, Garland, v. 2, 176

"Over Delamere Forest, a rough barren tract for eight miles. Very likely government have inclosed and planted it; for the 'forest' contained not a tree or shrub; and individuals also have done much in this way. At present, the trees are almost knee-high. At Kelsah, we leave the forest and emerge into the rich pastures and meadows of Cheshire. To Chester —the Albion Hotel; drive to Eaton Hall, Lord Grosvenor's; return—dine; misconduct of inn-keeper, who put me into his own filthy bed-chamber; (town full, it being assize time). Remove to the Royal Hotel; visit the cathedral, and 'let my due feet never fail to walk the studious cloister's pale,' &c. At every turn, since I came from Liverpool, I have been breaking out into quotations from Milton and Shakespeare. Bad Latin in a bishop; epitaph; and worse scholars in the Royal School. None of the boys could give the Latin of their coronation banner, and I offered half a guinea to him who would complete the following lines: '*Vir bonus est quis? Qui consulta patrum, qui*'—and translate them. Only one boy could supply '*leges juraque servat*,' and he began '*Vir bonus est quis*'—'He is a good man'—so I took up my half guinea and walked out, thinking of Mr. Brougham and his bill.

"Stopped at a small house of call to beg an idle pin. Old man and wife showed me their cows; their tenderness to the motherless lamb, and pity of me. Their gratitude to their cow, which, said the dame, 'when my house was burnt, maintained our whole family, old and unsightly as she looks, by making me — pounds of butter a week.'"[1]

The second of the two letters to Elizabeth T. Coalter was written in the afternoon on the same day as the first; so smoothly did Randolph's prolific and lively pen glide over paper:

"My Dear Bet, . . . I left the old farmer (Evans) and his dame (for he has a small farm under Mr. Whittemore, member for the borough of Bridgenorth), as well as his ale-house. I left the old couple fondling their lamb, and caressing it and their kine; one a Hereford red, with a fine calf, which they had

[1] London, May 27, 1822, Garland, v. 2, 182

been debating about selling to the butcher; but, at last, their affections got the better of their poverty, and the old man concluded by saying it would be a pity to kill the poor thing, and he would e'en keep it for the mother's sake. Although I stopped for a pin to fasten up the curtain behind the chaise, yet I asked for a draught of milk, warm from the favorite cow, which was given to me in a clean porringer, with a face of as true benevolence as I ever saw. On taking leave, I asked to contribute towards the rebuilding of the burnt house, telling them it was the custom in the country I came from. But the old man, with a face of great surprise, said, 'I was kindly welcome to the milk; it was a thing of nothing'; and they both rejected the money (only two half-crowns), until I told them they must oblige me by accepting it, or I should be ashamed of having such a trifle returned. Whereupon the gude man said he would give the postillion with the return chaise a skinful of his best ale, when he came back; and the dame, ascribing her good fortune to the mercy shown to the calf, promised, at my request, to remember me, in her prayers, as the sick stranger to whom she had ministered; and I left them, with feelings of deep respect for their honest poverty and kind heartedness. Mr. Whittemore is a great proprietor here. His great house, on the right, is under repair, and he occupies a 'cottage' in the village; about such a house as Mr. Wickham's. His poor tenant at Quat is the third instance I have met with of a person refusing money here. The first was the parish-clerk, at Battlefield; the next Bourne, the head-waiter at the Lion; a thing hardly credible in England, where the rapacity of this class, in particular, is proverbial; for—asking Mr. Wickham's pardon for making free with his person as well as his house—you meet with as well dressed persons as himself who will make you a low bow for sixpence; aye, and beg for it, to boot. I thought a thousand times of Mr. Wickham's speech. Plunder is the order of the day. Shopkeepers, tradesmen, but, above all, innkeepers, waiters, postillions, hostlers, and chambermaids, fleece you without mercy; all is venal. Pray remember the boots! Something for the waiter, sir!—and this at a coffee-house where you have only stopped in to take a glass of negus, after a play, and have paid double

price for it. You can't get a reply to the plainest question without paying for it, unless you go into a shop; and to speak to one whom you don't know is received with an air as if you had clapped a pistol to his breast."[1]

Passing by the country seat of St. John Stanley, who married the eldest daughter of Lord Sheffield, Gibbon's friend, and Vale Royal, the property of Thomas Cholmondeley, Lord Delamere, he journalized: "With the names and proprietors of all these places I was as familiarly acquainted as if I had lived all my life in the Palatinate."[2]

Another characteristic entry in the "log-book" is this: "Dr. Solomon and Gilead House. The doctor dead, but quackery is immortal."[3]

By Sept. 30, 1822, Randolph had visited Cambridge, Oxford, Bath, Bristol, Wales, Leamington, the Lakes, and Scotland, and had returned to London by the East Coast of England.[4] About the last of November, in the same year, he was again in the United States, and was present during the second session of the 17th Congress. But, during this session, however, nothing of sufficient importance arose to evoke his powers as a speaker.

Few men in our history, who have had no higher claim to public notice in Great Britain than that of being a member of the House of Representatives, have ever received such general attention in that country as Randolph did. "Mr. Randolph," Harvey tells us, "was a very marked 'lion' during this his first visit to London. He received great attention from the most distinguished nobility, who were delighted with his extraordinary conversational powers, and these civilities, thus heaped upon him, gave him very evident satisfaction."[5] One of his

[1] London, May 27, 1822, Garland, v. 2, 183.
[2] *Id.*, 181.
[3] *Id.*, 179.
[4] *The New Mirror*, v. 2, 43.
[5] *The New Mirror*, v. 2, 28.

public appearances was at the meeting of the African Institution held at London on May 10, 1822. There were about 1500 persons, mostly ladies, present, and the Duke of Gloucester presided. A report was read by the Secretary, stating that there had been a great increase in the slave trade, since the last annual meeting of the Institution. The meeting was then addressed by Lord Calthorpe, the Marquis of Lansdowne, Lord Nugent, William Wilberforce, and Henry Brougham, the framer of the immortal phrase, "the wild and guilty phantasy that man can hold property in man."[1] And, among the speakers, was Randolph, whose enmity to the slave-trade Brougham took occasion to panegyrize, when concluding his speech.

Randolph's speech was thus reported by *The London Times:*

"Mr. Randolph, the distinguished American, then rose to return thanks for this mark of respect towards the United States of America. He said that, after the eloquence, which had already been displayed upon this great subject, it would be an act of presumption, scarcely excusable in any stranger, but unpardonable in him, to intrude his unpremeditated expressions upon them, after the able speeches they had not only heard but felt. (Applause.) He was, however, impelled by a double motive, which he could not resist, to offer himself for a few moments to their attention: first, to discharge an act of duty in behalf of his native land, in the absence of its official representative; an absence as unexpected by himself as it was unforeseen, and which had cast upon him a duty he felt inadequate to perform—that of thanking the meeting for the grateful sense they had expressed towards America, and also to assure them that all that was exalted in station, in talent and in moral character among his countrymen was, as in England, firmly united for the suppression of this infamous traffic (loud applause). It was delightful to know that Virginia, the land of his sires, the place of his nativity, had for half a cen-

[1] Speech on Negro Slavery in the House of Commons, July 13, 1830.

tury affixed a public brand, an indelible stigma upon this traffic, and had put in the claim of the wretched objects of it to the common rights and attributes of humanity (loud applause). He repeated his thanks to the meeting for the flattering reception they had given him."

And this was the editorial comment of *The Times:* "The plainness of Mr. Randolph's appearance, his republican simplicity of manner, and his easy and unaffected address attracted much attention. He sat down amidst a burst of applause."[1]

We also find Randolph, during this same visit to England, speaking at a meeting for the improvement of prison discipline and for the reformation of juvenile offenders, held at London early in the month of June, 1822, and "attended by Dukes, Marquises, Earls, Bishops, Lords, Baronets, and Right Honorables." In the course of the meeting, a motion was made by Stephen Livingston, Esq., LL.D., M.P., "that the Right Honorable Sir G. W. Rose, Bart., M.P., and Edward Bootle Wilbraham, Esq., M.P., be added to the Vice Presidents of this society." This motion was seconded by Randolph. What personal knowledge, growled the New York *American*, could Randolph possibly have had of the merits of those two gentlemen.[2] But then Jacob Harvey had had no chance to tell the editor of *The American* how John Randolph, on his voyage over, had, in his astonishing familiarity with the geography of Great Britain, though he had never put his foot on its strand, called the attention of Harvey, an Irishman, to the fact that on every map of Ireland the town of Ballin-as-loe had been placed on the wrong side of the river Suck.[3]

More than one question of uncommon magnitude came up for discussion in the House during the 18th Congress. Early during the first session of that Congress, Webster

[1] *Richm. Enq.*, July 2 and 5, 1822.
[2] *Richm. Enq.*, Aug. 22, 1822.
[3] *The New Mirror*, v. 1, 313.

offered a resolution declaring that provision ought to be made by law for defraying the expense incident to the appointment of an agent or commission to Greece, whenever the President should deem it expedient to make such an appointment.[1] The occasion for the resolution was the desperate effort of Greece at that time to free herself from the loathsome dominion of the Turks. When the merits of this resolution had been presented by Webster with his usual power and eloquence, Clay offered another resolution, declaring that the American people would not see, without serious inquietude, any forcible interposition by the Allied powers of Europe, in behalf of Spain, to reduce to their former subjection those parts of the Continent of America which had proclaimed and established for themselves respectively independent governments, and had been solemnly recognized by the United States.[2] This resolution originated in the fact that Spain was still endeavoring to subdue her former provinces in South America, despite the recognition extended to them as independent republics, by the United States, and in the further fact that it was suspected that the allied powers of Europe were about to come to her assistance. The next day Poinsett, of South Carolina, after a lengthy speech, moved a modification of the resolution offered by Webster so as to make it merely express the sympathy of the United States for the Greeks and the interest felt by our Government in their welfare and success. He was[3] followed by Clay in a stirring speech, instinct with all the best qualities of the glowing, generous nature which compelled even his arch-enemy, Andrew Jackson, to pronounce him "a magnanimous rascal." Undaunted by the strains of splendid rhetoric which had just filled his ears, Randolph took issue with the advocates of the resolution and delivered two speeches replete with good sense and sober statesmanship.

[1] *A. of C.*, 1823–24, v. 1, 1084. [2] *Id.*, 1104. [3] *Id.*, 1111.

"This," said he in his first speech, "is perhaps one of the finest and prettiest themes for declamation ever presented to a deliberative assembly; but it appears to me in a light very different from any that has as yet been thrown upon it.

"I look at the measure as one fraught with deep and deadly danger to the best interests and to the liberties of the American people; and, so satisfied, Sir, am I of this, that I have been constrained by that conviction to overcome the almost insuperable repugnance I feel to throwing myself upon the notice of the House; but I feel it to be my duty to raise my voice against both these propositions. . . .

"My intention in rising at present is merely to move that the committee rise and that both of the resolutions may be printed. I wish to have some time to think of this business; to deliberate, before we take this leap in the dark into the Archipelago, or the Black Sea, or into the wide mouth of the La Plata. I know that the post of honor is on the other side of the House; the post of toil and of difficulty on this side; if, indeed, any body shall be with me on this side. It is a difficult and an invidious task to stem the torrent of public sentiment, when all the generous feelings of the human heart are appealed to. But, Sir, I was delegated to this House to guard the interests of the People of the United States; not to guard the rights of other people; and, if it was doubted, even in the case of England—that land fertile above all other lands (not excepting Greece herself) in great men—if it was doubted whether her interference in the politics of the Continent, though separated from it only by a narrow firth, were either for her honor or advantage; if the effect of that interference has been a monumental debt that paralyzes the arm, that certainly would have struck for Spain, can it be for us to seek, in the very bottom of the Mediterranean, for a quarrel with the Ottoman Porte? And this while we have an ocean rolling between? while we are in that sea without a single port to refit a ship; and while the Powers of Barbary lie in succession in our path. Shall we open this Pandora's box of political evils? . . . Are we prepared for a war with these pirates? Not that we are not perfectly competent to such a war, but does it suit our finances? Does it suit, Sir, our magnificent project of roads and canals? Does

it suit the temper of our people? Does it promote their interests? Will it add to their happiness? Sir, why did we remain supine while Piedmont and Naples were crushed by Austria? Why did we stand aloof while the Spanish peninsula was again reduced under *legitimate* government? If we did not interfere then, why now? . . .

"This Quixotism, in regard either to Greece or to South America, . . . is not what the sober and reflecting minds of our people require at our hands. Sir, we are in debt as individuals, and we are in debt as a nation; and never, since the days of Saul and David, or Cæsar and Cataline, could a more unpropitious period have been found for such an undertaking. The state of society is too much disturbed. There is always in a debtor a tendency either to torpor or to desperation; neither is friendly to such deliberations. But I will suspend what I have further to say on this subject. For myself, I see as much danger, and more, in the resolution proposed by the gentleman from Kentucky, as in that of the gentleman from Massachusetts. The war that may follow on the one is a distant war; it lies on the other side of the ocean. The war that may be induced by the other, is a war at hand; it is on the same Continent. I am equally opposed to the amendment which has been since offered to the original resolutions. Let us look a little further at all of them. Let us sleep upon them before we pass resolutions, which, I will not say, are mere loops to hang speeches on, and thereby commit the nation to a war, the issue of which it is not given to human sagacity to calculate."[1]

After this speech, action on the resolutions was postponed, and later they were laid on the table; but not before Randolph had drawn more blood from them.

"It is with serious concern and alarm," he declared in his second speech, "that I have heard doctrines broached in this debate fraught with consequences more disastrous to the best interests of this people than any that I ever heard advanced, during the five and twenty years since I have been honored

[1] *A. of C.*, 1823–24, v. 1, 1111.

with a seat on this floor. They imply, to my apprehension, a total and fundamental change of the policy pursued by this Government, *ab urbe condita*—from the foundation of the Republic to the present day. Are we, sir, to go on a crusade, in another hemisphere, for the propagation of two objects as dear and delightful to my heart as to that of any gentleman in this, or in any other assembly—Liberty and Religion—and, in the name of those holy words, by this powerful spell, is this nation to be conjured and beguiled out of the highway of Heaven; out of its present comparatively happy state into all the disastrous conflicts arising from the policy of European Powers; with all the consequences which flow from them? Liberty and Religion, Sir! Things that are yet dear in spite of all the mischief that has been perpetrated in their name. I believe that nothing similar to this proposition is to be found in modern history, unless in the famous decree of the French National Assembly, which brought combined Europe against them, with its united strength; and, after repeated struggles, finally effected the downfall of the French power.[1] . . .

"There was another remark that fell from the gentleman from Massachusetts, of which I shall speak, as I shall always speak of anything from that gentleman, with all the personal respect which may be consistent with freedom of discussion. Among other cases forcibly put by the gentleman why he would embark in this incipient crusade against Mussulmen, he stated this as one—that they hold human beings as property. Ah, Sir, and what says the Constitution of the United States on this point?—unless, indeed, that instrument is wholly to be excluded from consideration; unless it is to be regarded as a mere useless parchment, worthy to be burnt, as was once actually proposed. Does not that Constitution give its sanction to the holding of human beings as property? Sir, I am not going to discuss the abstract question of Liberty or Slavery, or any other abstract question. I go for matters of fact. But I would ask gentlemen in this House, who have the misfortune to reside on the wrong side of a certain mysterious parallel of latitude, to take this question seriously into consideration: whether the Government of the United States is

[1] *A. of C.* 123–24, v. 1, 1182.

prepared to say that the act of holding human beings as property is sufficient to place the party so offending under the ban of its high and mighty displeasure?[1] . . .

"Sir, I am afraid, that, along with some most excellent attributes and qualities, the love of liberty, jury trial, the writ of habeas corpus, and all the blessings of free government that we have derived from our Anglo-Saxon ancestors, we have got not a little of their John Bull, or rather John Bull-dog, spirit; their readiness to fight for anybody, and on any occasion. Sir, England has been for centuries the game-cock of Europe. It is impossible to specify the wars in which she has been engaged for contrary purposes; and she will with great pleasure see us take off her shoulders the labor of preserving the balance of power. We find her fighting, now for the Queen of Hungary, then for her inveterate foe, the King of Prussia, now at war for the restoration of the Bourbons, and now on the eve of war with them for the liberties of Spain.

"These lines on the subject were never more applicable than they have now become:

> 'Now Europe's balanced—neither side prevails,
> For nothing's left in either of the scales.'

"If we pursue the same policy, we must travel the same road, and endure the same burdens, under which England now groans. But, glorious as such a design might be, a President of the United States would, in my apprehension, occupy a prouder place in history who, when he retires from office, can say to the people who elected him: 'I leave you without a debt' than if he had fought as many pitched battles as Cæsar, or achieved as many naval victories as Nelson. And, what, Sir, is debt? In an individual it is slavery. It is slavery of the worst sort, surpassing that of the West India Islands; for it enslaves the mind as well as it enslaves the body; and the creature who can be abject enough to incur, and to submit to, it, receives in that condition of his being, perhaps, an adequate punishment. Of course, I speak of debt, with the exception of unavoidable misfortune. I speak of debt caused by mis-

[1] *A. of C.*, 1823–24, v. 1, 1184.

management, by unwarrantable generosity, by being generous before being just. I know that this sentiment was ridiculed by Sheridan, whose lamentable end was the best commentary upon its truth. No, sir; let us abandon these projects. Let us say to those seven millions of Greeks: 'We defended ourselves when we were but three millions, against a power, in comparison to which the Turk is but as a lamb. Go and do thou likewise.' And so with respect to the Governments of South America. If, after having achieved their independence, they have not valor to maintain it, I would not commit the safety and independence of this country in such a cause. I will, in both these cases, pursue the same line of conduct which I have ever pursued, from the day I took a seat in this House in '99; from which, without boasting, I challenge any gentleman to fix upon me any colorable charge of departure.[1] . . .

"Let us adhere to the policy laid down by the second as well as the first founder of our Republic; by him who was the Camillus, as well as the Romulus, of the infant State, to the policy of Peace, Commerce, and honest Friendship with all nations, entangling alliances with none; for to entangling alliance we must come, if you once embark in projects such as this. And, with all my British predilections, I suspect I shall, whenever that question shall present itself, resist as strongly an alliance with Great Britain as with any other power. We were sent here to attend to the preservation of the peace of this country, and not to be ready, on all occasions, to go to war, whenever anything like what, in common parlance, is termed a turn up, takes place in Europe. . . .

"What is our situation? We are absolutely combatting shadows. The gentleman would have us to believe his resolution is all but nothing; yet, again, it is to prove omnipotent, and fill the whole globe with its influence. Either it is nothing, or it is something. If it is nothing, let us lay it on the table and have done with at once; but if it is that something, which it has been on the other hand represented to be, let us beware how we touch it. For my part, I would sooner put the shirt of Nessus on my back than sanction these doctrines—doctrines such as I never heard from my boyhood till now. They go the

[1] *A. of C.*, 1823–24, v. 1, 1187.

whole length. If they prevail, there are no longer any Pyrenees; every bulwark and barrier of the Constitution is broken down; it is become *tabula rasa*, a *carte blanche*, for every one to scribble on it what he pleases."[1]

How effective the speeches of both Webster and Randolph were, was gracefully recognized by Mr. Fuller, of Massachusetts, who, in following them, said that he was in the situation of Poor King Richard when

> "As, in a theatre, the eyes of men,
> After a well graced actor leaves the stage,
> Are idly bent on him that enters next."[2]

Then ensued the great debate over an appropriation to defray the expenses of a survey of the country, as a preliminary step towards the establishment by the Federal Government of an extensive system of roads and canals. Two years before, President Monroe had vetoed a bill "for the preservation and repair of the Cumberland Road" on the ground that the Federal Constitution conferred neither the express nor the incidental power on Congress to enact such a bill; but, now, he, too, like Jefferson and Madison before him, was to furnish an illustration of the fact that, under the pressure of practical necessities, a paper constitution is not unlike a lady's fan—a thing which can be expanded or contracted almost at pleasure; though he was about to sign a bill which was to efface some of the most prominent landmarks of the Federal Constitution as originally construed by the Republican party. Randolph, it is hardly necessary to say, with his views of State Sovereignty, could not be induced to countenance such a measure, and he not only opposed this bill because of its immediate tendencies, but also because of the readiness with which, if enacted, it

[1] *A. of C.*, 1823–24, v. 1, 1188. [2] *Id.*, 1199.

might be cited as a precedent for the authority of Congress to emancipate every slave in the United States.

"With the argument of the President, however," he said, "I have nothing to do. I wash my hands of it. and will leave it to the triumph, the clemency, the mercy of the honorable gentleman from Kentucky—if, indeed, to use his own language, amid the mass of words in which it was enveloped, I have been able to find it. My purpose in regard to the argument of the gentleman from Kentucky is to show that it lies in the compass of a nut shell; that it turns on the meaning of one of the plainest words in the English language. I am happy to be able to agree with that gentleman in at least one particular, to wit: in the estimate the gentleman has formed of his own powers as a grammarian, philologer, and critic; particularly as those powers have been displayed in the dissertation with which he has favored the committee on the interpretation of the word 'establish.'

"'Congress,' says the Constitution, 'shall have power to *establish* (ergo, says the gentleman, Congress shall have power to *construct*) post-roads.'

"One would suppose, that, if anything could be considered as settled by precedent in legislation, the meaning of the words of the Constitution must, before this time, have been settled by the uniform sense in which that power has been exercised from the commencement of the Government to the present time. What is the fact? Your statute-book is loaded with acts for the 'establishment' of post-roads, and the Postmaster General is besieged with petitions for the 'establishment' of post-offices; and yet we are now gravely debating on what the word 'establish' shall be held to mean! A curious predicament we are placed in; precisely the reverse of that of Molière's citizen, turned gentleman, who discovered, to his great surprise, that he had been talking 'prose' all his life long without knowing it—a common case. It is just so with all prosers, and I hope I may not exemplify it in this instance. But, Sir, *we* have been for five and thirty years establishing post-roads, under the delusion that we were exercising a power specially conferred upon us by the Constitution, while we

were, according to the suggestion of the gentleman from Kentucky, actually committing *treason*, by refusing, for so long a time, to carry into effect that very article of the Constitution.[1]

. . . . . .

"Miserable, indeed, would be the condition of every free people, if, in expounding the charter of their liberties, it were necessary to go back to the Anglo-Saxon, to Junius and Skinner, and other black-letter etymologists. Not, Sir, that I am very skilful in language: although I have learned from a certain curate of Brentford, whose name will survive when the whole contemporaneous bench of Bishops shall be buried in oblivion, that *words* are the counters of wise men, and the money of fools, and that it is by the dexterous cutting and shuffling of this pack, that is derived one-half of the chicanery, and more than one-half of the profits, of the most lucrative profession in the world. And, Sir, by this dexterous exchanging and substituting of words, we shall not be the first nation in the world which has been cajoled, if we are to be cajoled, out of our rights and liberties.

"In the course of the observations, which the gentleman from Kentucky saw fit to submit to the Committee, were some pathetic ejaculations on the subject of the sufferings of our brethren of the West. Sir, our brethren of the West have suffered [from the same cause] as our brethren throughout the United States, although with them the cause exists in an aggravated degree, from the acts of those to whom they have confided the power of legislation, by a departure—and we have all suffered from it—I hope no gentleman will understand me as wishing to make any invidious comparisons between different quarters of our country—by a departure from the industry, the simplicity, the economy, and the frugality of our ancestors. They have suffered from a greediness of gain that has grasped at the shadow while it has lost the substance; from habits of indolence, of profusion, of extravagance; from an apery of foreign manners and of foreign fashions; from a miserable attempt at the shabby genteel, which only serves to make our poverty more conspicuous.

[1] *A. of C.*, 1823–24, v. 1, 1296.

The way to remedy this state of suffering, is to return to those habits of labor and industry, from which we have thus departed.[1]

"With these few remarks, permit me now to recall the attention of the committee to the original design of this Government. It grew out of the necessity, indispensable and unavoidable in the circumstances of this country, of some general power, capable of regulating foreign commerce. Sir, I am old enough to remember the origin of this Government; and, though I was too young to participate in the transactions of that day, I have a perfect recollection of what was public sentiment on the subject. And I repeat, without fear of contradiction, that the proximate, as well as the remote, cause of the existence of the Federal Government was the regulation of foreign commerce. Not to particularize all the difficulties which grew out of the conflicting laws of the States, I will refer to but one, arising from Virginia taxing an article which Maryland then made duty-free; and to that very policy may be attributed, in a great degree, the rapid growth and prosperity of the town of Baltimore. If the old Congress had possessed the power of laying a duty of ten per cent. *ad valorem* on imports, this Constitution would never have been called into existence.

"But we are told that, along with the regulation of foreign commerce, the States have yielded to the General Government, in as broad terms, the regulation of domestic commerce—I mean the commerce among the several States—and that the same power is possessed by Congress over the one as over the other. It is rather unfortunate for this argument that, if it applies to the extent to which the power to regulate foreign commerce has been carried by Congress, they may prohibit altogether this domestic commerce, as they have heretofore, under the other power, prohibited foreign commerce.

"But why put extreme cases? This Government cannot go on one day without a mutual understanding and deference between the State and General Governments. This Government is the breath of the nostrils of the States. Gentlemen may say what they please of the preamble of the Constitution;

[1] *A. of C.*, 1823–24, v. 1, 1297.

but this Constitution is not the work of the amalgamated population of the then existing confederacy, but the offspring of the States; and, however high we may carry our heads and strut and fret our hour, 'dressed in a little brief authority,' it is in the power of the States to extinguish this Government at a blow. They have only to refuse to send members to the other branch of the Legislature, or to appoint electors of President and Vice-President, and the thing is done. I hope gentlemen will not understand me as seeking for reflections of this kind; but, like Falstaff's rebellion—I mean Worcester's rebellion—they lay in my way and I found them.[1] . . .

"I remember to have heard it said elsewhere that, 'when gentlemen talked of precedent, they forgot they were not in Westminster Hall.' Whatever trespass I may be guilty of upon the attention of the Committee, one thing I will promise them, and will faithfully perform my promise. I will dole out to them no political metaphysics. Sir, I unlearned metaphysics almost as early as Fontenelle, and he tells us, I think, it was at nine years old. I shall say nothing about that word *municipal*. I am almost as sick of it as honest Falstaff was of 'security'; it has been like ratsbane in my mouth ever since the late Ruler of France took shelter under that word to pocket our money and incarcerate our persons, with the most profound respect for our *neutral* rights. I have done with the word *municipal* ever since that day. Let us come to the plain, common sense construction of the Constitution. Sir, we live under a government of a peculiar structure, to which the doctrines of the European writers on civil polity do not apply; and, when gentlemen get up and quote Vattel as applicable to the powers of the Congress of the United States, I should as soon have expected them to quote Aristotle or the Koran. Our Government is not like the consolidated monarchies of the Old World. It is a solar system; an *imperium in imperio;* and when the question is about the one or the other, what belongs to the *imperium* and what to the *imperio*, we gain nothing by referring to Vattel. He treats of an integral government; a compact structure, *totus teres atque rotundus.* But ours is a system composed of two distinct governments;

[1] *A. of C.*, 1823–24, v. 1, 1299.

the one general in its nature, the other internal. Now, Sir, a government may be admirable for external, and yet execrable for internal, purposes. And, when the question of power in the government arises, this is the problem which every honest man has to work. The powers of government are divided in our system between the General and State Governments, except some powers which the people have wisely retained to themselves. With these exceptions, all the power is divided between the two Governments. The given power will not lie unless, as in the case of direct taxes, the power is specifically given; and, even then, the States have a concurrent power. The question for every honest man to ask himself is, to which of these two divisions of Government does the power in contest belong?[1] . . . This then is the problem we have to settle: Does this power of internal improvement belong to the General or to the State Governments, or is it a concurrent power? Gentlemen say we have power, by the Constitution, to establish post-roads; and, having established post-roads, we should be much obliged to you to allow us, therefore, the power to construct roads and canals into the bargain. If I had the physical strength, Sir, I could easily demonstrate to the committee that, supposing the power to exist on our part, of all the powers that can be exercised by this House, there is no power that would be more susceptible of abuse than this very power. Figure to yourself a committee of this House determining on some road, and giving out the contracts to the members of both Houses of Congress, or to their friends, &c. Sir, if I had strength, I could show to this Committee that the Asiatic plunder of Leadenhall street has not been more corrupting to the British Government than the exercise of such a power as this would prove to us.[2]

"I said," Randolph further declared, "that this Government, if put to the test, a test it is by no means calculated to endure, as a government for the management of the internal concerns of this country, is one of the worst that can be conceived, which is determined by the fact that it is a government not having a common feeling and common interest with the governed. I know that we are told, and it is the first time that

[1] *A. of C.*, 1823–24, v. 1, 1302. [2] *Id.*, 1303.

the doctrine has been openly avowed, that, upon the responsibility of this House to the people, by means of the elective franchise, depends all the security of the People of the United States against the abuse of the powers of this Government.

"But, Sir, how shall a man from Mackinaw, or the Yellow Stone River, respond to the sentiments of the people who live in New Hampshire. It is as great a mockery—a greater mockery than it was to talk to these colonies about their virtual representation in the British Parliament. I have no hesitation in saying that the liberties of the colonies were safer in the custody of the British Parliament than they will be in any portion of this country, if all the powers of the States, as well as those of the General Government, are devolved on this House; and, in this opinion, I am borne out, and more than borne out, by the authority of Patrick Henry himself.[1] . . .

"It is not a matter of conjecture merely, but of fact, of notoriety, that there does exist on this subject an honest difference of opinion among enlightened men; that not one or two, but many States in the Union see, with great concern and alarm, the encroachments of the General Government on their authority. They feel that they have given up the power of the purse, and the sword, and enabled men, with the purse in one hand and the sword in the other, to rifle them of all that they hold dear. . . . We, too, now begin to perceive what we have surrendered; that, having given up the power of the purse and the sword, everything else is at the mercy and forbearance of the General Government. We did believe there were some parchment barriers—no! what is worth all the parchment barriers in the world—that there was, in the powers of the States, some counterpoise to the power of this body; but, if this bill passes, we can believe so no longer.[2]

"There is one other power," further said Randolph, fingering the string, to which Fear and Passion were as obedient as wild beasts to the lyre of Orpheus, "which may be exercised, in case the power now contended for be conceded, to which I ask the attention of every gentleman who happens to stand in the same unfortunate predicament with myself—of every man who has the misfortune to be, and to have been born, a slaveholder.

[1] *A. of C.*, 1823–24, v. I, 1304. [2] *Id.*, 1305.

If Congress possesses the power to do what is proposed by this bill, they may not only enact a sedition law—for there is precedent—but they may emancipate every slave in the United States, and with stronger color of reason than they can exercise the power now contended for. And where will they find the power? They may follow the example of the gentlemen who have preceded me, and hook the power upon the first loop they find in the Constitution. They might take the preamble, perhaps the war-making power, or they might take a greater sweep, and say, with some gentlemen, that it is not to be found in this or that of the granted powers, but results from all of them, which is not only a dangerous, but *the most* dangerous doctrine. Is it not demonstrable that slave labor is the dearest in the world, and that the existence of a large body of slaves is a source of danger? Suppose we are at war with a foreign power, and freedom should be offered them by Congress, as an inducement to them to take a part in it; or, suppose the country not at war, at every turn of this federal machine, at every successive census, that interest will find itself governed by another and increasing power, which is bound to it neither by any common tie of interest or feeling. And, if ever the time shall arrive, as assuredly it has arrived elsewhere, and, in all probability, may arrive here, that a coalition of knavery and fanaticism shall, for any purpose, be got up on this floor, I ask gentlemen, who stand in the same predicament as I do, to look well to what they are now doing; to the colossal power with which they are now arming this Government. The power to do what I allude to is, I aver, more honestly inferable from the war-making power than the power we are now about to exercise. Let them look forward to the time when such a question shall arise, and tremble with me at the thought that that question is to be decided by a majority of the votes of this House, of whom not one possesses the slightest tie of common interest or of common feeling with us."[1]

It was rallying cries like these which soon fixed public attention throughout the country upon Randolph as the real protagonist of the State-Rights cause. But his voice

[1] *A. of C.*, 1823-24, v. 1, 1307.

was powerfuless to prevent the bill from being ordered to be engrossed for a third reading by a vote of 115 to 86.

About this time, a decided impetus was given to the progress of Federal Consolidation by the opinion of Chief Justice Marshall in the case of Gibbons *vs.* Ogden [9 Wheaton 1.] holding that the powers of Congress comprehend navigation within the limits of every State in the Union, so far as it may be in any manner connected with "commerce with foreign nations or among the several States, or with the Indian tribes." Discussing this opinion, Randolph wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough as follows:

"It is the fashion to praise the Chief Justice's opinion in the case of Ogden against Gibbons. But you know I am not a fashionable man; I think it is unworthy of him. Lord Liverpool has set him an example of caution in the last speech of the king; one that shames our gasconading message. I said it was too long before I read it. It contains a great deal that has no business there, or indeed anywhere. Mr. Webster's phrase 'unity,' which he adopts, is a conceit (*concetto*), and a very poor one, borrowed from Dr. Rush, who with equal reason pronounced disease to be a unit. Now, as this *theory* of the Doctor had no effect whatever upon his *practice*, and that alone could affect his patients, it was so far a harmless maggot of the brain. But, when that theory was imbibed at a single gulp by his young disciples, who were sent out annually from Philadelphia, it became the means of death not to units, or tens, or hundreds, but thousands, and tens of thousands.

"A judicial opinion should decide nothing and embrace nothing that is not before the court. If he had said that 'a vessel, having the legal evidence that she has conformed to the regulations, which Congress has seen fit to prescribe, has the right to go from a port of any State to a port of any other with freight or in quest of it, with passengers or in quest of them, *non obstante* such a law as that of the State of New York under which the appellee claims,' I should have been satisfied.

"However, since the case of Cohen *vs.* Virginia, I am done with the Supreme Court. No one admires more than I do the

extraordinary powers of Marshall's mind; no one respects more his amiable deportment in private life. He is the most unpretending and unassuming of men. His abilities and his virtues render him an ornament not only to Virginia, but to our nature. I cannot, however, help thinking that he was too long at the bar before he ascended the bench; and that, like our friend T——, he has injured, by the indiscriminate defence of right or wrong, the tone of his perception (if you will allow so quaint a phrase) of truth or falsehood."[1]

Hardly more admiration was entertained by Randolph for John Marshall than for Spencer Roane, the celebrated judge of the Court of Appeals of Virginia, whom Jefferson would probably have made Chief Justice of the United States if John Adams had not turned the last sands in his hourglass to such effective account, and of whom John Randolph wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough in connection with the Presidency:

"I differ from you about 'his being a Virginian'; not that I doubt the fact, but take my word for it he is becoming every day more and more known out of the State and occupies a large space in the public eye. I think he can be elected easily against anyone yet talked of."[2]

Having been informed shortly after the decision in Gibbons *vs.* Ogden that Miss Roane, the daughter of Judge Roane, who was then dead, was expected to visit Washington, Randolph gave expression to the pleasure, with which he received the information. in the following letter:

"If Miss Roane should honor our metropolis with her presence, I shall make it a point to call upon her, if, for no other cause, from the very high respect in which I held her father whilst living, and hold his memory, being dead. I consider him as a great loss to his country, not only in his judicial character, but as a statesman, who formed a rallying-point for

[1] Mar. 3, 1824, Garland, v. 2, 212. [2] Garland, v. 2, 143.

the friends of State-rights. Besides, he had the judgment to perceive, and the candor to acknowledge, the consistency of my public conduct with my avowed principles; and he had too much greatness of mind to lend himself to the long and bitter persecution with which I was assailed by two governments, by the press, by a triumphant party (many of whom were old sedition-law federalists), until, Sertorius-like, after having waged a long war upon my own resources, I was vanquished as much by treachery in my own camp as by the courage or the conduct of the enemy. My hopes (plans, I never had any) have been all blasted. and here I am, like Huddlesford's oak.

"'Thou, who, unmoved, hast heard the whirlwind chide,
Full many a winter, round thy craggy bed,
And, like an earth-born giant, hast outspread
Thy hundred arms, and Heaven's own bolts defied,
Now liest, along thy native mountain's side,
Uptorn! yet deem not that I come to shed
The idle drops of pity o'er thy head,
Or, basely, to insult thy blasted pride.
No, still 'tis thine, though fallen, imperial Oak,
To teach this lesson to the wise and brave—
That 'tis far better, overthrown and broke,
In Freedom's cause to sink into the grave,
Than in submission to a tyrant's yoke,
Like the vile Reed, to bow and be a slave.'"[1]

The Tariff Bill of 1824 gave Randolph another opportunity to exhibit his insight into the bearing of the recent industrial growth of the Northern States upon the material prosperity of the Southern. The South produced five-sixths of the raw exports of the country, and, being an amost exclusively agricultural community, it was a matter of vital concern to it that freedom of exchange with the European purchasers of its cotton and other productions should be as little restricted or burdened as possible. The more it bought abroad, the more of its staples it could sell

[1] Garland, v. 2, 214.

abroad, and, under the economic conditions which prevailed in Europe, especially as respected the cost of labor, Europe could supply the South with finished products more cheaply than the Northern States. Inevitably, therefore, as the utter futility of any attempt to build up a great manufacturing interest upon the basis of slave labor became more and more manifest to Southern statesmen, they became more and more inimical to the policy of American protection, which tended to make every commodity bought by the South dearer without conferring upon it any of the incidental benefits of governmental patronage. As yet, however, the South was only beginning fully to realize the effect that the encouragement of domestic manufactures was certain to have under the dominion of the despotic institution, which stunted its growth, and doomed it to laws of development wholly different from those of the rest of the United States, in rendering it tributary to the looms and furnaces of the North. As yet also, Massachusetts was too partial to her maritime interests to exchange the trident for the distaff (to use Randolph's phrase); though the time was near at hand when, irritated by her accession to the protective system, advocated by Henry Clay, Randolph was to denounce "the meretricious alliance between old Massachusetts and that bawd Kentucky."[1]

The coöperation between purely agrarian regions in the West and the Middle States in behalf of protection gave Randolph an opening for the picturesque ridicule in which he excelled.

"May I be pardoned," he said, "for adverting to the fact—I know that comparisons are extremely odious—that, when we look to Salem and Boston, to parts of the country, where skill and capital and industry notoriously exist, we find opposition to this bill; and that, when we look to countries, which could

[1] Letter to Francis W. Gilmer, Washington, Jan. 8, 1826, Bryan MSS.

sooner build one hundred pyramids such as that of Cheops than manufacture one cambric needle or a paper of White Chapel pins or a watch spring, we hear a clamor about this system for the protection of manufactures. The merchants and manufacturers of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, the province of Maine and Sagadahock repel this bill, whilst men in hunting shirts with deer-skin leggings and moccasins on their feet want protection for manufacturers—men with rifles on their shoulders and long knives in their belts, seeking in the forests to lay in their next winter's supply of bear meat."[1]

How successful the North had been in turning its political opportunities to its pecuniary profit, while the South was dogmatizing about constitutional points, no one discerned more clearly than Randolph. By the assumption of the State debts by the Federal Government, and the purchase of these debts for a mere song by monied men and speculators beyond the limits of the South, a capital of eighty millions of dollars, he contended, had been poured in a single day into the coffers of the North; and he claimed that nearly the whole amount of the pension list was disbursed in the Eastern States besides. He also claimed that the result had been a complete revolution in the relative situations of the two sections, as they stood at the time of the adoption of the Federal Constitution. Then, the South was comparatively rich; and the North positively poor. Now the North was flourishing and rich, and held the South in bonds of dependency.[2] On another occasion, Randolph said that the stream of pensions ran northeast as steadily as the waters of the Gulf Stream.[3]

The Tariff speech, though both too violent and excursive, at times abounds in striking passages. It contains one of those quotations which Randolph was in the habit of employing so appositely to point or grace his own thoughts. "We are the eel," he said, "that is being

[1] *A. of C.*, 1823–24, v. 2, 2370. [2] *Id.*, 3359. [3] Sawyer, 39.

flayed while the cook-maid pats us on the head and cries with the clown in *King Lear*, 'Down wantons, down.'"[1]

But the speech is especially worthy of notice because in it once again Randolph manifested his readiness to put the fate of the South to the touch, "to win or lose it all."

"If," he said, "under a power to regulate trade you prevent exportation; if, with the most approved spring lancets, you draw the last drop of blood from our veins; if *secundum artem* you draw the last shilling from our pockets, what are the checks of the Constitution to us? A fig for the Constitution! When the scorpion's sting is probing us to the quick shall we stop to chop logic? Shall we get some learned and cunning clerk to say whether the power to do this is to be found in the Constitution, and then, if he, from whatever motive, shall maintain the affirmative, like the animal, whose fleece forms so material a portion of this bill, quietly lie down and be shorn."[2]

This reference to a sheep reminds us of his assertion that he detested the duty on wool so deeply that he would go a mile out of his way at any time to kick one.[3]

Two of Randolph's best utterances during the debate over the Tariff of 1824, however, are not contained in the speech from which we have been quoting, but in briefer efforts. One was a short speech on a motion to reduce the duties on coarse woolens. In connection with this motion, Randolph said:

"I am surprised that the votaries of humanity—persons who cannot sleep, such is their distress of mind at the very existence of negro slavery—should persist in pressing a measure, the effect of which is to aggravate the misery of that unhappy condition, whether viewed in reference to the slave, or to his master, if he be a man possessing a spark of humanity; for what can be more pitiable than the situation of a man,

[1] *A. of C.*, 1823–24, v. 2, 2379. [2] *Id.*, 2361. [3] *Life of Quincy*, 97.

who has every desire to clothe his negroes comfortably, but who is absolutely prohibited from so doing by legislative enactment? I hope that none of those who wish to enhance to the poor slave (or what is the same thing—to his master) the price of his annual blanket, and of his sordid suit of coarse, but, to him, comfortable woollen cloth, will ever travel through the Southern country to spy out the nakedness, if not of the land, of the cultivators of the soil. It is notorious that the profits of slave labor have been, for a long time, on the decrease; and that, on a fair average, it scarcely reimburses the expense of the slave, including the helpless ones, whether from infancy or age. The words of Patrick Henry, in the Convention of Virginia, still ring in my ears: 'They may liberate every one of your slaves. The Congress possess the power, and will exercise it.' Now, Sir, the first step towards this consummation, so devoutly wished by many, is to pass such laws as may yet still further diminish the pittance which their labor yields to their unfortunate masters. To produce such a state of things as will insure, in case the slave shall not elope from his master, that his master will run away from him. Sir, the blindness, as it appears to me—I hope gentlemen will pardon the expression—with which a certain quarter of this country—I allude particularly to the Seaboard of South Carolina and Georgia—has lent its aid to increase the powers of the General Government on points, to say the least, of doubtful construction, fills me with astonishment and dismay. And I look forward, almost without a ray of hope, to the time, which the next census, or that which succeeds it, will assuredly bring forth, when this work of destruction and devastation is to commence in the abused name of humanity and religion, and when the imploring eyes of some will be, as now, turned towards another body, in the vain hope that it may arrest the evil, and stay the plague."[1]

Randolph delivered another brief speech in reply to Louis McLane, of Delaware, who, irritated by Randolph's allegation that one of his arguments was *felo de se*, had, notwithstanding Randolph's assurance that he had meant

[1] *A. of C.*, 1823–24, v. 2, 2256.

no disrespect, declared that the gentleman from Virginia had displayed a good head, but that he would not accept his head, were he obliged to take his heart along with it. This attack was wholly unexpected by Randolph. McLane was an able and upright man, who was destined to a highly distinguished and useful career, and it so happened that, shortly after he had become a member of the House, Randolph, who had an unfailing ear for the ring of good coin, had written to a friend a letter describing him and giving his origin and history, and concluding with these admiring words: "He is the first fellow I have seen here by a double distance."[1] Wholly unheralded as the attack was, Randolph met it with a retort as perfect as the memorable one made by Lord Thurlow when he was twitted with his humble birth by a member of the House of Lords:

"It costs me nothing, Sir," he said, "to say that I very much regret that the zeal which I have not only felt, but cherished, on the subect of laying taxes in a manner which, in my judgment, is inconsistent, not merely with the spirit, but the very letter, of the Constitution, should have given to my remarks, on this subject, a pungency, which has rendered them disagreeable, and even offensive, to the gentleman from Delaware. For that gentleman, I have never expressed any other sentiment but respect—I have never uttered, or entertained, an unkind feeling towards that gentleman, either in this House or elsewhere, nor do I now feel any such sentiment towards him. I never pressed my regard upon him; I press it upon no man. He appears to have considered my remarks as having a personal application to himself. I certainly did not intend to give them that direction, and I think that my prompt disclaimer of any such intention ought to have disarmed his resentment, however justly it may have been excited. He has been pleased, Sir, to say something, which, no doubt, he thinks very severe, about my head and my heart.

"How easy, Sir, would it be for me to reverse the gentleman's

[1] Garland, v. 2, 218.

proposition, and to retort upon him that I would not, in return, take that gentleman's heart, however good it may be, if obliged to take such a head into the bargain.

"But, Sir, I do not think this. I never thought it; and, therefore, I cannot be so ungenerous as to say it; for, Mr. Speaker, who made me a searcher of hearts? of the heart of a fellow-man, a fellow-sinner? Sir, this is an awful subject! better suited to Friday or Sunday next (Good Friday and Easter Sunday), two of the most solemn days in the Christian calendar, when I hope we shall all consider it, and lay it to heart as we ought to do.

"But, Sir, I must still maintain that the argument of the gentleman is suicidal. He has fairly worked the equation, and one-half of his argument is a complete and conclusive answer to the other. And, Sir, if I should ever be so unfortunate as, through inadvertence, or the heat of debate, to fall into such an error, I should, so far from being offended, feel myself under obligation to any gentleman who would expose its fallacy, even by ridicule, as fair a weapon as any in the whole Parliamentary armory. I shall not go so far as to maintain, with my Lord Shaftesbury, that it is the unerring test of truth, whatever it may be of temper; but, if it be proscribed as a weapon as unfair as it is confessedly powerful, what shall we say (I put it, Sir, to you and to the House) to the poisoned arrow?; to the tomahawk and the scalping-knife? Could the most unsparing use of ridicule justify a resort to these weapons? Was this a reason that the gentleman should sit in judgment on *my* heart?; yes, Sir, *my* heart, which the gentleman (whatever he may say) in his heart believes to be a frank heart, as I trust it is a brave, heart. Sir, I dismiss the gentleman to his self-complacency; let him go; yes, Sir, let him go, and thank his God that he is not as *this* publican."[1]

The moderation not less than the pungency of this reply won much praise at the time[2]; and it would be hard to find its equal in the history of parliamentary bodies.

After fighting the bill tooth and nail, Randolph finally

[1] *A. of C.*, 1823–24, v. 2, 2315. [2] Garland, v. 2, 217.

gave up all hope of defeating it in the House. "I am satisfied now," he wrote to a friend, "that nothing can avail to save us. Indeed, I have long been of that opinion. 'The ship will neither wear nor stay, and she may go a shore, and be d—d!', as Jack says."[1]

Later, he gave in a letter this account of the end:

"The tariff is finished (in our House at least), and so am I. I was sent for on Tuesday in all haste to vote upon it; when I got there, the previous question was taking, and the clerk reading the yeas and nays.

"At the end, Gilmore (a fine fellow, by the way, although a Georgian and a Crawford man) moved for a call of the House. When that was over, Wilde, from Georgia, moved to amend the title. I, as big a fool as he, got up to tell him what an ass he was. (By the way, for 'Smith's verses on the old continental money,' which the reporter put into my mouth—why or wherefore he only can tell—read what I actually did say: *Swift's verses on the motto upon Chief Justice Whitshed's coach.*) So much for reporters. That over, Drayton, of S. C., who is the Purge of the House, got up to make another motion to amend. By this time, the noisome atmosphere overcame me, and I left the hall; Mr. D. on his legs; but a copious effusion of blood from the lungs has been the consequence. It came on in about thirty minutes after I got home; so that the debate on the amendment of the tariff bill has the honor of my *coup de grâce.*"[2]

At this session of Congress, Randolph served upon a committee appointed to investigate a charge of official laxity against William H. Crawford, the Secretary of the Treasury, made by Ninian Edwards. In a letter to his constituents written on the *Nestor* at sea, on May 17, 1824, when he was on his second voyage to Europe, he refers to this matter in these terms:

"Fellow-citizens, Friends and Freeholders! A recurrence of the same painful disease, that drove me from my post some two years ago, again compels me to ask a furlough; for I cannot

[1] Garland, v. 2, 218. [2] Apr. 25, 1824, *ibid.*

consent to consider myself in the light of a deserter. But no consideration whatever would have induced me to leave Washington, so long as a shadow of doubt hung over the transactions of the Treasury; which I was (among others) appointed to investigate. . . .

"I confess that I was not without some misgivings that all was not right. Holding myself aloof from the intrigues and intriguers of Washington, I had remained a passive spectator of a scene, such as I hope never again to witness. Not that I was without a slight, a very slight, preference, in the choice of the evils, submitted to us for our acceptance. I inclined towards Mr. Crawford for some reasons which were private and personal, and with which it is unnecessary to trouble you; but, chiefly, because you preferred him to his competitors, and because, if elected, he should, in a manner, be compelled to throw himself into the hands of the least unsound of the political parties of the country; that he would, by the force of circumstances, be constrained to act with us (the People); whilst the rival candidates would, by the same force of circumstances, be obliged to act against us and with the tribe of office-hunters and bankrupts that seek to subsist upon our industry and means. The number of these that infest Washington, especially during a first session of Congress, and, above all, about the termination of an administration, is inconceivable to those who have not seen the swarm.

"I said that I had some misgivings that all was not as it ought to be. But, when I read the reply of Mr. Crawford, I had not a shadow of doubt remaining in my mind. It is the most triumphant and irresistible answer that ever met the accusation of a base and perjured informer."[1] . . .

Jacob Harvey gives us an amusing account of the untoward circumstances under which this address was written. Of Harvey himself, Randolph had written to his niece from London after his first voyage in these terms:

"His name is Jacob Harvey, son of Joseph Massey H., a Limerick merchant, attached to the Society of Friends—what

[1] *Richm. Enq.*, May 25, 1824.

is called a gay Quaker. His grandfather, Reuben H., was a merchant of Cork and, during the war of 1776, received a letter under General Washington's own hand, returning his thanks and those of Congress for his kindness to our countrymen in Ireland, prisoners and others. He was introduced to me by Mr. Colden as we left the quay."[1]

To this we might add only that, when Randolph first became acquainted with Harvey, the latter was a New York merchant of high standing in point of both capacity and integrity[2]; and that his lively papers about Randolph in the *New Mirror*, a New York publication of his time, show him to have been a capital good fellow with considerable literary gifts. The day before Randolph sailed from New York on his second voyage to Europe, Harvey, after assisting him in making his preparations for it, left him at Bunker's, and promised to call upon him the next morning at half-past nine o'clock for the purpose of accompanying him to the steamboat, *The Nautilus*, which was to convey him to the packet. The next morning, when Harvey did call at the hour named, expecting to find him ready to leave for the dock, he found him sitting at a table in his dressing-gown with a large Bible open before him, and engaged in the composition of a letter; while John, his servant, was on his knees busy at the task of emptying one trunk and filling another. The rest of the story we shall give in Harvey's own words:

"In the name of heaven," said I, "Mr. Randolph, what is the matter? Do you know that it will soon be ten o'clock and the steamboat waits for nobody? You promised me last night to have everything packed up and ready when I called, and here you are not even dressed yet!"

"I cannot help it, Sir," replied he. "I am all confusion this morning; everything goes wrong; even my memory has gone 'a good wool gathering.' I am just writing a farewell letter to

[1] Garland, v. 2, 219. [2] *Ibid.*

my constituents, and would you believe it, Sir?; I have forgotten the exact words of a quotation from the Bible which I want to use and, as *I* always quote correctly, I cannot close my letter until I find the passage; but, strange to say, I forget both the chapter and verse. I never was at fault before, Sir; what *shall* I do?"

"Do you remember any part of the quotation?", said I. "Perhaps I can assist you with the rest, as time is precious."

"It begins," replied he, 'How have I loved thee, oh Jacob,' but, for the life of me, I can not recollect the next words. Oh! my head! my head! Here do you take the Bible and run your eye over *that* page, whilst I am writing the remainder of my address."

"My dear sir," said I, "you have not time to do this now, but let us take letter, Bible and all on board the steamboat where you will have ample time to find the passage you want before we reach the packet."

To this suggestion Randolph assented, though with reluctance, but the address appeared without the Biblical quotation.[1]

As the *Nestor* was casting off, Randolph shouted a farewell to Harvey, and assured him that he would land at the Cove of Cork, the dangers of the sea always excepted, and go over to Limerick and spend a day or two at the house of Harvey's father; and to Harvey's surprise he afterwards received a letter from his old home telling him that Randolph had been there, and had made himself extremely agreeable.[2]

One result of this visit to Ireland was a conversation with Harvey on Randolph's return to the United States in which Randolph gave him his impressions of that country.

"Sir," said he, "much as I was prepared to see misery in the south of Ireland, I was utterly shocked at the condition of the poor peasantry between Limerick and Dublin. Why,

[1] *The New Mirror*, v. 2, 56. [2] *Ibid.*

Sir, John never felt so proud at being a *Virginia slave*. He looked with horror upon the mud hovels and miserable food of the *white slaves* and I had no fear of *his* running away. The landlords and the clergy of the Established Church have a fearful account to give some day or other, Sir, of the five and ten talents entrusted to them. I could not keep silence, Sir, but, everywhere in the stage-coaches and hotels, I expressed my opinions fearlessly. One morning, whilst breakfasting at Morrison's, in Dublin, I was drawn into an argument with half-a-dozen country gentlemen; all violent tories who seemed to think that all the evils of Ireland arose from the disloyalty of the Catholics. I defended the latter on the ground that they were denied their political rights; and I told them very plainly in the language of Scripture that, until they 'unmuzzled the ox which treadeth out the corn,' they must expect insurrections and opposition to the Government. I had no sooner uttered these words than they all endeavoured to silence me by clamour, and one of them insinuated that I must be 'a foreign spy.' I stood up at once, Sir, and, after a pause, said: 'Can it be possible that I am in the metropolis of Ireland, in the centre of hospitality, or do I dream? Is *this* the way that Irish gentlemen are wont to treat strangers who happen to express sympathy for the wrongs of their countrymen? If, gentlemen, you can not refute my arguments, at least do not drown my voice by noisy assertions which you do not attempt to prove. If ever any of you should visit old Virginia, I shall promise you a fair hearing at all events; and you may compare *our* system of slavery with *yours*—aye, and be the judges yourselves!' This pointed rebuke had the desired effect; the moment they discovered who I was they instantly apologized for their rudeness, insisted upon my dining with them, and never did I spend a more jovial day. The instant *politics* were laid aside, all was wit and repartee and song. So ended my first and last debate with a party of *Irish tories*."[1]

His convictions, however, were not to be blarneyed away. On his return to the United States, he is reported by Harvey as saying:

[1] *The New Mirror*, v. 2, 57.

"There never was such a country on the face of the earth as England; and it is utterly impossible that there ever can be any combination of circumstances hereafter to make such another country as old England now is—God bless her! But in Ireland the Government and the church, or the *lion and the jackal*, have divided the spoils between them, leaving nothing for poor Pat but the potatoes."[1]

While abroad, Randolph not only traveled over parts of Great Britain but also in France, Switzerland, Germany, and Belgium; returning to the United States from Liverpool in the *Cortez*, Capt. DeCost, in October, 1824.[2] During his travels, he kept a journal of his movements, but it is a very disappointing one; being nothing more than a series of hasty jottings intended for his own eye only, and having little value beyond its chronology. Once, at any rate, it is marked by the combination of "energy and bitterness" which John Quincy Adams found in his speeches.[3] At Secherons, he says, he was "stunned by noise, stifled by dust, tormented by flies, and devoured by fleas," in one of the first hotels in Europe. Fortunately, a letter, written by him from Paris to Dr. Brockenbrough, ekes out to a limited extent the scantiness of the Journal. It is anti-Gallican enough to remind us of his saying that he would rather be a frog than a Frenchman, except for the fact that, if he were a frog, he might be eaten by a Frenchman.[4]

"This date says everything. I arrived here on Sunday afternoon, and am now writing from the Grand Hotel de Castile, Rue Richelieu and Boulevard des Italiens; for, as the French say, it 'gives' upon both, having an entrance from each.

"I need not tell either of *you* that it is in the very focus of gayety and fashion; and, if the *maître d'hotel* may be credited, it is always honored by the residence of 'M. le Duc de Davuan-

[1] *The New Mirror*, v. 2, 57.
[2] Journal, *Va. Hist. Soc.*
[3] *Memoirs*, v. 1, 458.
[4] Loughborough MSS.

saire,' whenever his Grace pays a visit to his birthplace. The civilities, which, through the good offices of my friend, Mr. Foster, were tendered to me two years ago, from 'Davuansaire House,' and 'Chisonig,' would render this circumstance a recommendation, if the neatness and comfort of my apartments did not supersede all necessity for any other recommendation. . . .

"But how do you like Paris?"

"Not in the least. And I stay here only waiting for my letters, which are . . . to the return of this day's post from London. To you I need not say one word of the Lions of Paris, but will, in a word, tell you that crucifixes, and paintings of crucifixions, and prints of Charlotte Corday and Marie Antoinette &c., are the fashion of the day; that the present dynasty is infirmly seated in the saddle; and that, by little and little, every privilege, acquired not by the designs of its authors, but by the necessary consequences of such a Revolution, will be taken from the People; nay, I am persuaded that the lands will be resumed, or (what is the same thing) an ample equivalent will be plundered from the public, to endow the losers with. At the next session of the deputies, the measure of reimbursing the emigrants—a measure, the very possibility of which was scouted only three years ago [will be enacted]. The Marquis de La Fayette had sailed for the United States about ten days before my arrival here. I am sorry he has taken the step. It will do no good to his reputation, which, at his time of life, he ought to nurse. I take it for granted that Ned Livingstone, or some other equally pure patriot will propose *another* donation to him; the last, I think, was on the motion of Beau Dawson. I hope I may be there, to give it just such another reception as M. Figaro had at my hands; although it is certainly a species of madness (and I hear that this malady is imputed to me) to be wearing out my strength and spirits, and defending the rights (whether of things or of persons) of a people who lend their countenance to them that countenance the general plunder of the public, in the expectation either that they may share in the spoil, or that their former peculations will not be examined into.

"I consider the present King of France and his family to be as

firmly seated on the throne of the Tuileries as ever Louis XIV was at Versailles. All possibility of counter-revolution is a mere chimera of distempered imagination. It would be just as possible to restore the state of society and manners which existed in Virginia half a century ago. I should as soon expect to see the Nelsons, and Pages, and Byrds, and Fairfaxes living in their palaces, and driving their coaches and sixes; or the good old Virginia gentlemen in the assembly drinking their twenty and forty bowls of rack punches, and madeira, and claret, in lieu of a knot of deputy sheriffs and hack attorneys, each with his cruet of whiskey before him, and puddle of tobacco-spittle between his legs.

"But to return to Paris. It is wonderfully improved since you saw it; nay, since the last restoration, but it is still the filthiest hole, not excepting the worst parts of the old town of 'Edinboro,' that I ever saw *out of Ireland.* I have dined, for your sake, *chez Beauvilliers*, and had bad fare, bad wine, and even bad bread, a high charge and a surly *garçon.* Irving, whom you know by character, (our ex-minister at Madrid), was with me. He says all the *Traiteurs* are bad, and the crack ones worst of all. I have also dined with Very, the first *restaurateur* of the Palais Royal, four times; on one of which occasions I had a good dinner and a *fair* glass of champagne—next door to Very, once, at the Café de Chartres—with Pravot—Pastel; all in the Palais Royal; all bad, dear, and not room enough, even at *Beauvilliers'* or Very's, to sit at ease. I can have a better dinner for half a guinea at the Traveller's, in a saloon fit for a prince, and where gentlemen alone can enter, and[with]a pint of the most exquisite Madeira than I can get here for fifteen francs. I have dined like a marketman for 5 fr., 10 sous; that is the cheapest. All the wine, except *le vin ordinaire*, is adulterated shockingly. The English made every thing dear, and spoiled the *garçons* and *filles*, whose greediness is only equalled by their impudence. Crucifixes, madonnas, and pictures and prints of that cast, with Charlotte Corday &c. &c., are the order of the day. Paris swarms with old priests who have been dug up since the Restoration, and they manufacture young ones (Jesuits especially) by hundreds at a single operation.

"Monsieur, whom you saw at Edinburgh, is remarkable, as I hear, for consuming a hat per day, when one is each morning put upon his toilet. Hats were not so plenty then. . . .

Adieu,

"J. R. of R."

"Except a few of the English, with which people Paris swarms, I have not seen, either in the streets or elsewhere, anything that by possibility might be mistaken for a gentleman. The contrast in this respect with London is most striking; indeed I would as soon compare the Hottentots with the French as these last with the English. No *Enquirer* yet received, and I pine for news from home."[1]

When Randolph reached the United States, the Presidential election of 1824 had taken place without any decisive result; consequently it was thrown into the House of Representatives, and John Quincy Adams was elected by the joint votes of his friends and the friends of Henry Clay, who had received the lowest number of electoral votes, over Andrew Jackson who had received the highest. The election in the House afforded Randolph an opportunity to reassert his nice scruples about State Rights. When the count was had, Daniel Webster was appointed by the Tellers, who sat at one table, and Randolph by the Tellers, who sat at another, to announce what it had disclosed. Webster announced that the Tellers, for whom he acted, had found the vote to be as follows: for John Quincy Adams of Massachusetts, 13 votes; for Andrew Jackson, of Tennessee, 7 votes; and for William H. Crawford, of Georgia, 4 votes. On the other hand, Randolph announced the same result, but took care to say that Adams, Jackson and Crawford had received the votes of so many states, instead of so many votes.[2]

In the spring of 1825, Randolph again became a candidate for the House. On April 5, 1825, he wrote to Dr.

[1] Paris July 24, 1824, Garland, v. 2, 223.

[2] Garland, v. 2, 233.

Brockenbrough: "Much against my will—I do not deceive myself—I am involved in another election. Two more years, if I live as long in that bear-garden, the House of Representatives!"[1]

It was on the 18th day of the same month that Hugh A. Garland, Randolph's biographer, then a lad at Hampden-Sidney College, heard him for the first time. It was on the day of the election at Prince Edward Court House. Randolph was dressed in his old uniform of blue and buff, with knee buckles and long fair-top boots; and, when urged to make a speech, he pleaded his wretched health and begged to be excused; but the Mortons, the Prices, the Watkinses, and the Venables, of Prince Edward County, the county which was his Tenth Legion, would not accept the plea. He accordingly retired to an open bench in the corner of the Court House yard, and, resting his head on the handle of his umbrella, remained buried in deep reflection for 10 or 15 minutes. He then ascended the stile near by and delivered a speech which left an indelible impression upon Garland's memory.[2]

He was elected to the House, but, before he took his seat, he was elected to the United States Senate besides to fill out an unexpired term. At this time, owing to his zealous advocacy of Southern interests, his popularity was in perihelion, and his election was achieved, it has been thought, with less real, than apparent, opposition. The contestants for the favor of the Virginia Legislature were Henry St. George Tucker, Randolph's half-brother, Wm. B. Giles, John Floyd, and Randolph. On the first ballot, the vote stood Tucker 65, Randolph 63, Giles 58, and Floyd 40. Floyd, being the last in the poll, was then dropped, and, on the second ballot, the vote stood, Tucker 87, Randolph 79, and Giles, 60. Giles, being the last in the poll, was then dropped, and, on the third ballot, the vote stood Randolph, 104, Tucker, 80. There would seem to be no

[1] Garland, v. 2, 233. [2] *Id.*, v. 2, 234.

foundation for the impression that Randolph actually owed his election to the generosity of Henry St. George Tucker. After the members of the Legislature had deposited their ballots on the third vote, Jackson, one of Tucker's friends, did rise and state that it was Tucker's desire that, in no event, should he be placed in competition with Randolph; that, believing that Randolph had no chance of being elected, Tucker's friends had on their own responsibility put Tucker in nomination, but that, as the election had now narrowed down to a contest between Tucker and Randolph, they thought it due to Tucker that he should be withdrawn; and accordingly Tucker was withdrawn. It was then suggested that the ballot boxes ought to be emptied and the election gone through with anew; and, at this point, Jackson declared that he did not know that the ballots had been deposited on the third vote, or he should have withdrawn Tucker earlier. Then, another gentleman observed that, under the circumstances, the person, who had been last dropped, that is Giles, ought to be restored to his former position as one of the contestants; but the chairman decided that, since the ballots on the third vote had all been actually deposited in the ballot boxes, and there had been no irregularity of any sort to vitiate them, they must be counted.[1] On learning the result of the election through Dr. Brockenbrough, Henry St. George Tucker wrote to him:

"I have barely time, before the closing of the mail, to acknowledge the receipt of your friendly letter, and to express my hearty concurrence in the gratification you feel at the election of my brother. I could wish, indeed, that my name had been withheld, yet hope that its withdrawal, even at the time it took place, was not too late to manifest my deference to him. God preserve him long as an honor to his station and the old Dominion. I cannot but think that this occurrence will reanimate his spirit and restore him to that activity in the

[1] *Richm. Enq.*, Dec. 10, 1825.

public councils for which he was always remarkable until he thought himself unkindly treated by his native State. He will now I trust see in himself her favorite son."[1]

Generous and affectionate words, indeed, to have issued from the heart of a man who was himself fully equal in every respect to the duties of the office to which Randolph had been chosen.

Almost as a matter of course, Randolph was soon assailing the administration of John Quincy Adams in the Senate as violently as he had assailed that of John Adams. "I bore some humble part," he said, "in putting down the dynasty of John the First, and, by the Grace of God, I hope to aid in putting down the dynasty of John the Second."[2] Speaking of the two, during the Presidency of the son, he said:

"I was in New York when he [John Adams] first took his seat as Vice President. I recollect—for I was a schoolboy at the time—attending the lobby of Congress when I ought to have been at school. I remember the manner in which my brother was spurned by the coachman of the then Vice President for coming too near the arms emblazoned on the escutcheon of the Vice Regal carriage. Perhaps, I may have some of this old animosity rankling in my heart, coming from a race, who are known never to forsake a friend or forgive a foe. I am taught to forgive my enemies; and I do, from the bottom of my heart, most sincerely, as I hope to be forgiven; but it is *my* enemies not the enemies of my country, for, if they come here in the shape of the English, it is my duty to kill them; if they come here in a worse shape—wolves in sheep's clothing—it is my duty and my business to tear the sheep-skins from their backs, and, as Windham said to Pitt, open the bosom and expose beneath the ruffled shirt the filthy dowlas. This language was used in the House of Commons where they talk and act like men; where they eat and drink like men; and do other things like men, not like Master Bettys. Adams determined to take

[1] Garland, v. 2, 240. [2] Bouldin, 168.

warning by his father's errors; but, in attempting the perpendicular, he bent as much the other way. Who would believe that Adams, the son of the Sedition-Law President, who held office under his father, who up to Dec. 6, 1807, was the undeviating staunch adherent to the opposition to Jefferson's administration, then almost gone, who would believe he had selected for his pattern the celebrated Anacharsis Cloots, 'orator of the human race'? As Anacharsis was the orator of the human race, so Adams was determined to be the President of the human race, when I am not willing that he should be President of my name and race; but he is and must be till the third day of March, 18——I forget when. He has come out with a speech and a message and with a doctrine that goes to take the whole human family under his special protection. Now, sir, who made him his brother's keeper? Who gave him, the President of the United States, the custody of the liberties or the rights or the interests of South America or any other America, save only the United States of America, or any other country under the sun? He has put himself we know into the way, and I say God send him a safe deliverance, and God send the country a safe deliverance from his policy."[1]

In one of his earlier speeches, Randolph referred to Samuel Adams and John Adams as Samuel Adams "and t'other Adams."[2] His scent was warmer when, in his letter to Lloyd, he spoke of John Adams as "this political Malvolio." He disliked John Adams because he was a Federalist; but he regarded John Quincy Adams with a shade of increased aversion because he deemed him a turn-coat Federalist. He said that, when Barnabas Bidwell and John Quincy Adams went into the White House by the back door, he went out by the front.[3] "The cub," he declared in 1821, "was a greater bear than the old one."[4] "This," he said on still another occasion when John Quincy Adams was President, "is the last four years of the

[1] Garland, v. 2, 248; *Reg. of Deb.*, 1825–26, v. 2, part 1, 399.
[2] *A. of C.*, 1811–12, v. 1, 536. [3] Bryan MSS.
[4] Garland, v. 2, 154.

Administration of the father renewed in the person of the son." In the debate on the Panama Mission, Randolph concluded one of his speeches by repeating his story of the simpleton who was sent to search the vaults of Parliament at the time of the Gunpowder Plot and reported that he had found fifty barrels, had removed 25 of them, and hoped that the rest would do no harm.

"The step you are about to take," he added with a characteristic protrusion of his long forefinger, "applies the match to the powder; and, be there 25 barrels or 50 barrels, there is enough to blow not the first of the Stuarts *but the last of another dynasty* sky-high, Sir! Yes, Sir, sky-high!"[1]

And sky-high, Josiah Quincy, who heard this speech, tells us, "rose the voice of Mr. Randolph, as if to follow Mr. Adams in his aerial flight."[2]

"Meanness is the key-word that deciphers everything in Mr. Adams' character," he once said in a letter to Dr. Brockenbrough[3]; but in John Quincy Adams Randolph possessed an enemy with a tongue hardly less corrosive than his own. Rufus Choate once said that Adams had the instinct of a wild beast for the carotid artery, and there was not a little truth in the observation. In the case of Randolph, it was to no small extent so justly exasperated that no fault can be found with him at times for gratifying it to the full extent of his ability.

One of the first debates, in which Randolph attacked the administration of John Quincy Adams, was the debate on the Panama Mission. The occasion for this debate was an invitation which had been extended to the United States by the new-born South American Republics to send a representative to the Congress, which they proposed to hold at Panama, for the purpose of considering various important subjects of concern either to them alone or to

[1] *Figures of the Past*, by Josiah Quincy, 227.
[2] *Id.*, 227.
[3] Feb. 12, 1829, Garland, v. 2, 319.

North, as well as South, America. Both John Quincy Adams and Henry Clay, whose appointment as Secretary of State by Adams had been passionately scored by the friends of Andrew Jackson as a corrupt bargain, sprung from the succor brought by Clay to Adams in the Presidential contest in the House, were bold and enterprising statesmen. Accordingly, in the annual message, that Adams sent to Congress in December, 1826, he announced that the South American invitation had been accepted, and that Ministers, on the part of the United States, would be commissioned to attend the Congress. But Randolph had no mind to see the United States represented in a congress where its delegates were as likely to find themselves seated beside mulatto generals and statesmen as white men, and he therefore held up the project to scorn. He even went so far as to express a suspicion that the paper containing the invitation to the United States to attend the Congress had been manufactured in the office of the Secretary of State. When the President first communicated the documents, relating to the mission, to the Senate, several resolutions were adopted by that body at the instance of Martin Van Buren, declaring that it ought to act upon the question with open doors, unless it should appear that the publication of the more important of the documents would be prejudicial to existing negotiations, and requesting the President to inform the Senate whether the publication of any portions of the documents would be objectionable, and, if so, what.[1] The President replied by saying that all his communications to the Senate in regard to the Panama Congress had been made in confidence, and that, believing that the established usage of free confidential communications between the Executive and the Senate ought for the public interest to be preserved unimpaired, he deemed it his indispensable duty to leave to the Senate itself the decision of a question,

[1] *Reg. of Deb.*, 1825–26, v. 2, part 1, 142.

involving a departure (previously, so far as he was informed, without example) from that usage, and upon the motives for which (not being informed of them) he did not feel himself competent to decide.[1] When this message was received by the Senate, it aroused Randolph to a high pitch of resentment.

"I did maintain," said he, "the rights of the President; but from the moment he sent us this message, from that moment, did my tone and manner to him change; from that moment was I an altered man, and, I am afraid, not altered for the better.

"Sir, if he would leave to the Senate the decision of the question, I would agree with him; but the evil genius of the American House of Stuart prevailed. He goes on to say that the question 'involves a departure, hitherto, so far as I am informed, without an example, from that usage, and upon the *motives for which*, not being informed of them, I do not feel myself competent to decide.' If this had been prosecuted for a libel, what jury would have failed to have found a verdict on such an innuendo? That we were breaking away from our own usages to gratify personal spleen? I say nothing about our *movements*, because he was not informed of them. The innuendo was that our motives were black and bad. That moment did I put, like Hannibal, my hand on the altar, and swear eternal enmity against him and his, politically. From that moment I would do any thing within the limits of the Constitution and the law; for, as Chatham said of Wilkes, 'I would not, in the person of the worst of men, violate those sanctions and privileges which are the safeguard of the rights and liberties of the best; but, within the limits of the Constitution and the law, if I don't carry on the war, whether in the Peninsula or any where else, it shall be for want of resources.'"[2]

Then were spoken the scathing words involving an attack upon the private character of Henry Clay, who was

[1] *Reg. of Deb.*, v. 2, part 1, 145.
[2] *Ibid.*, 1825–26, v. 2, part 1, 400.

addicted to the hazards of the card-table, to which no Kentuckian at that time could answer satisfactorily except with the lips of a pistol:

"Who made him a judge of our usages? Who constituted him? He has been a professor, I understand. I wish he had left off the pedagogue when he got into the Executive chair. Who made him the *censor morum* of this body? Will anyone answer this question? Yes or no? Who? Name the person. Above all, who made him the searcher of hearts, and gave him the right, by an innuendo black as hell, to blacken our motives? Blacken our motives! I did not say that then. I was more under self-command; I did not use such strong language. I said, if he could borrow the eye of Omniscience himself, and look into every bosom here; if he could look into that most awful, calamitous, and tremendous of all possible gulfs, the naked unveiled human heart, stripped of all its coverings of self-love, exposed naked, as to the eye of God, I said, if he could do that, he was not, as President of the United States, entitled to pass upon our motives, although he saw and knew them to be bad. I said, if he had converted us to the Catholic religion, and was our Father Confessor, and every man in this House, at the footstool of the confessional had confessed a bad motive to him by the laws of his Church, as by this Constitution, above the law and above the church, he, as President of the United States, could not pass on our motives, though we had with our own lips told him our motives, and confessed they were bad. I said this then, and I say it now. Here I plant my foot; here I fling defiance right into his teeth before the American people; here I throw the gauntlet to him and the bravest of his compeers, to come forward and defend these miserable dirty lines: 'Involving a departure, hitherto, so far as I am informed, without example, from that usage, and upon the motives for which, not being informed of them, I do not feel myself competent to decide.' Amiable modesty! I wonder we did not all at once fall in love with him, and agree *una voce* to publish our proceedings, except myself; for I quitted the Senate ten minutes before the vote was taken. I saw what was to follow; I knew the thing would not be done at all, or

would be done unanimously. Therefore, in spite of the remonstrances of friends, I went away, not fearing that any one would doubt what my vote would have been, if I had staid. After twenty-six hours' exertion, it was time to give in. I was defeated, horse, foot, and dragoons—cut up, and clean broke down by the coalition of Blifil and Black George—by the combination, unheard of till then, of the puritan with the blackleg."[1]

The challenge was delivered to Randolph by General Jesup, Clay's second, whose narrative of the circumstances, under which it was delivered, is interesting reading:

"I was unable to see Mr. Randolph until the morning of the 1st of April, when I called on him for the purpose of delivering the note. Previous to presenting it, however, I thought it proper to ascertain from Mr. Randolph himself whether the information which Mr. Clay had received—that he considered himself personally accountable for the attack on him—was correct. I accordingly informed Mr. Randolph that I was the bearer of a message from Mr. Clay, in consequence of an attack which he had made upon his private as well as public character in the Senate; that I was aware no one had the right to question him out of the Senate for anything said in debate, unless he chose voluntarily to waive his privileges as a member of that body. Mr. Randolph replied that the Constitution did protect him but he would never shield himself under such a subterfuge as the pleading of his privilege as a Senator from Virginia; that he did hold himself accountable to Mr. Clay; but he said that gentleman had first two pledges to redeem; one that he had bound himself to fight any member of the House of Representatives who should acknowledge himself the author of a certain publication in a Philadelphia paper; and the other that he stood pledged to establish certain facts in regard to a gentleman whom he would not name; but he added he could receive no verbal message from Mr. Clay—that any message from him must be in writing. I replied that I was not authorized by Mr. Clay to enter into or receive any verbal

[1] *Reg. of Deb.*, 1825–26, v. 2, part 1, 401.

explanations—that the inquiries I had made were for my own satisfaction and upon my own responsibility—that the only message of which I was the bearer was in writing. I then presented the note and remarked that I knew nothing of Mr. Clay's pledges; but that, if they existed, as he (Mr. Randolph) understood them, and he was aware of them, when he made the attack complained of, he could not avail himself of them—that by making the attack I thought he had waived them himself. He said he had not the remotest intention of taking advantage of the pledges referred to; that he had mentioned them merely to remind me that he was waiving his privilege not only as a Senator from Virginia but as a private gentleman; that he was ready to respond to Mr. Clay and would be obliged to me, if I would bear his note in reply; and that he would, in the course of the day, look out for a friend. I declined being the bearer of his note but informed him my only reason for declining was that I thought he owed it to himself to consult his friends before taking so important a step. He seized my hand, saying, 'You are right, Sir. I thank you for the suggestion; but, as you do not take my note, you must not be impatient, if you should not hear from me today. I now think of only two friends; and there are circumstances connected with one of them which may deprive me of his services, and the other is in bad health. He was sick yesterday, and may not be out today.' I assured him that any reasonable time, which he might find necessary to take, would be satisfactory. I took leave of him; and it is due to his memory to say that his bearing was throughout the interview that of a high-toned, chivalrous gentleman of the old school."[1]

The member of the House, to whom Randolph referred, in connection with the two unredeemed pledges, was George Kremer of Pennsylvania, who, during the late Presidential contest in the House, had avowed himself the author of an anonymous publication, the writer of which Clay had declared that he would call to account were his identity ever disclosed, and yet had not been so good as

[1] *30 Years' View*, by Benton, v. 1, 70.

his word. The "great man" was President Adams, with whom Clay had had a newspaper controversy turning upon a question of fact; which had become shelved. After Jesup left Randolph, the latter went to Benton's room at Brown's Hotel, and, without explaining the reason for his question, asked him whether he was a blood-relation of Mrs. Clay. Benton answered that he was, and then Randolph, remarking that this fact put an end to a request which he had desired to make of him, told Benton that he had received the challenge, had accepted it, and would apply to Col. Tatnall to be his second. Before leaving Benton, Randolph also communicated to him the fact, which he said that he would divulge to no other person, that he did not intend to fire at Clay; and he enjoined inviolable secrecy upon Benton in regard to this fact until the duel should be over. Later, he sent by the hand of Col. Tatnall a formal acceptance of the challenge in these words:

"Mr. Randolph accepts the challenge of Mr. Clay. At the same time, he protests against the *right* of any minister of the Executive Government of the United States to hold him responsible for words, spoken in debate as a Senator from Virginia in crimination of such minister or the administration under which he shall have taken office. Colonel Tatnall, of Georgia, the bearer of this letter, is authorized to arrange with General Jesup (the bearer of Mr. Clay's challenge) the terms of the meeting to which Mr. Randolph is invited by that note."[1]

The terms of this note, suggesting as they did a question of constitutional immunity, led to an interchange of notes between the seconds which dispelled the impression that had been formed by Clay that Randolph had in his speech itself waived his parliamentary privilege—an act, of course, which could have been set down to nothing but a spirit of

[1] *30 Years' View*, by Benton, v. 1, 71.

personal defiance, and would have been tantamount to an invitation to Clay to challenge him.

For a time, it looked as if the duel would be averted; for the seconds of the parties, with the aid of Benton, who was friendly to both Randolph and Clay, contrived to defer it for a week, in the hope that an accommodation might be effected. With a view to giving Randolph an opportunity to make an explanation that might salve Clay's wounded honor, Jesup wrote to Tatnall that the injury of which Clay complained was that he had been charged by Randolph with having forged or manufactured a paper connected with the Panama Mission, and had been termed a blackleg by him. Jesup ended by saying that the explanation, which he considered necessary, was that Randolph should declare that he had had no intention of charging Clay, either in his public or private capacity, with forging or falsifying any paper or misrepresenting any fact; and also that the term "blackleg" was not intended to apply to Clay. To this note Tatnall replied as follows:

"Mr. Randolph informs me that the words used by him in debate were as follows: 'That I thought it would be in my power to show evidence sufficiently presumptive to satisfy a Charlotte (County) jury that this invitation was manufactured here—that Salazar's letter [The Mexican Minister's letter inviting the United States to the Congress] struck me as bearing a strong likeness in point of style to the other papers. I did not undertake to prove this but expressed my suspicion that the fact was so. I applied to the administration the epithet, 'puritanic—diplomatic—black-legged administration.' Mr. Randolph, in giving these words as those uttered by him in debate, is unwilling to afford any explanation as to their meaning and application."[1]

Benton, who had heard the speech and was certain that no such words as "forging and falsifying" had been used

[1] *30 Years' View*, by Benton, v. 1, 73.

by Randolph, urged at the conferences of the parties, to which he was freely admitted, a construction of the words avowed by Randolph which he thought should render a hostile meeting unnecessary.

"I heard it all," he says, "and, though sharp and cutting, I think it might have been heard had he been present without any manifestation of resentment by Mr. Clay. The part which he took so seriously to heart, that of having the Panama invitations manufactured in his office, was to my mind nothing more than attributing to him a diplomatic superiority which enabled him to obtain from the South American Ministers the invitations that he wanted; and not at all that they were spurious fabrications. As to the expression 'blackleg and puritan,' it was merely a sarcasm to strike by antithesis, and which, being without foundation, might have been disregarded."

These views, Benton tells us, if they had come from Randolph himself might have been sufficient; "but he was inexorable and would not authorize a word to be said beyond what he had written."

We have gone with some detail into the efforts made to prevent the Randolph-Clay duel because, among other reasons, their futility furnishes us with another proof of the wanton malice which led Henry Adams to insinuate that Randolph was a calculating bully who never exposed his skin to any real risk when he could avoid it.

All hope of arresting the duel having been dissipated, the seconds proceeded to make the necessary arrangements for it. Half past four o'clock, in the afternoon on Saturday, April 8, 1826, was fixed as the time for it; a spot in a dense forest on the Virginia side of the Potomac above the Little Falls Bridge as the place. Pistols were to be the weapons, the distance was to be ten paces, each party was to be attended by his two seconds and a surgeon, and Benton was to be at liberty to be present as a common friend of the principals. There was to be no practising

beforehand; and the words "one," "two," "three," "stop" were to be given out after the word "fire" in quick succession. It was at the instance of Randolph that Virginia was selected as the scene of the combat. It was for words spoken in debate as a Virginia Senator that he had been called out, and, if he fell, he wished to fall on the soil endeared to him by every tie of devoted loyalty and affection. There was at this time in Virginia a statute against duelling, but, as he did not intend to fire at Clay, he did not lack the casuistry to persuade himself that he would not violate it by merely facing Clay and his pistol.

The evening before the duel, Benton called to see Clay. Some degree of estrangement had sprung up between them since the recent Presidential contest in the House, and he wished to show Clay that it had not affected his personal regard for him. The family were in the parlor, there was company with them, some of whom remained late, Clay's youngest child (James, Benton thought it was) fell asleep upon the sofa, and Mrs. Clay was, as always since the death of her daughter, the picture of desolation, but calm and "conversable," and apparently ignorant of the approaching event. All these things Benton recollected only as we recollect the incidents which fringed some tragic moment. At last, when all but Clay and Benton had deserted the room, Benton obtained the opportunity that he desired to assure Clay that, despite political differences, his personal feelings towards him were unchanged, and that, in whatever concerned his life or honor, his best wishes went with him. Clay made a kindred response, and at midnight they parted.

On the day of the duel, and only a short time before it was to take place, Benton called to see Randolph too. Randolph was then living halfway between Washington and Georgetown, and, therefore, on the road that led to the duelling ground. Benton wished to ascertain whether Randolph's intention of not firing at Clay was still un-

altered. He knew that he could not ask such a question directly of a man so sensitive to his word as Randolph, so he told of his visit to Clay the night before, of the prolonged sitting, the sleeping child, and the unsuspecting wife; and added that he could not help reflecting how different everything might be the next night. "Randolph understood me perfectly," declares Benton, "and immediately said with a quietude of look and expression which seemed to rebuke an unworthy doubt: 'I shall do nothing to disturb the sleep of the child or the repose of the mother.'" His seconds, Tatnall and General James Hamilton, of South Carolina, were engaged at the time in the next room in their preparations for the duel.[1]

In the meantime, that is the night before, Randolph had imparted to Hamilton also his intention of not firing at Clay.

"Mr. Randolph," says Hamilton, "sent for me. I found him calm but in a singularly kind and confiding mood. He told me that he had something on his mind to tell me. He then remarked: 'Hamilton, I have determined to receive without returning Clay's fire· nothing shall induce me to harm a hair of his head; I will not make his wife a widow or his children orphans. Their tears would be shed over his grave; but, when the sod of Virginia rests on my bosom, there is not in this wide world one individual to pay this tribute upon mine.' His eyes filled, and, resting his head upon his hand, we remained some moments silent."

The friendship between them, Hamilton says, was a sort of posthumous friendship bequeathed by their mothers. After adverting to the painful situation, in which Randolph's resolution placed him, Hamilton contented himself with saying that, on such a subject, a man's own conscience and bosom were his best monitors. He would not advise, he said, but, under the enormous and unprovoked

[1] *30 Years' View*, by Benton, v. 1. 70, 74.

personal insult which Randolph had offered to Clay, he could not dissuade. He felt bound, however, he added, to tell Tatnall of Randolph's decision; which he did the same night; with the result that together they repaired to Randolph's lodgings about midnight and found him reading *Paradise Lost.* For some moments, he would not permit them to say a word about the duel, but entered upon a strain of animated comment upon one of his favorite passages in Milton. When this topic had been exhausted, Tatnall told him that he had been informed of his resolution not to return Clay's fire, and that, if he was to go out only to see him shot down, Randolph must find some other friend. Finally, after much talk, Tatnall was persuaded that his withdrawal as a second might lead to misconception and consented to let Randolph have his way; Randolph saying with a smile, "Well, Tatnall, I promise you one thing, if I see the devil in Clay's eye, and that, with *malice prepense*, he means to take my life, I may change my mind."[1]

According to Benton, however, Randolph's intention not to fire at Clay underwent a brief modification, owing to the disturbing impression made upon his mind by a circumstance of which he was informed by Tatnall. This was that Clay, who was unaccustomed to the use of the pistol, had expressed the fear that he might not be able to fire in time, if the "word" was to be given out so quickly as had been agreed upon. This remark suggested to Randolph's mind the idea that Clay was actuated by a deliberate, cold-blooded desire to kill him. The consequence was that, when Benton came up behind Randolph's carriage near the duelling-ground, and spoke to Randolph's body-servant, John, Randolph recognized Benton's voice, and, looking out of his carriage-window, said: "Colonel, since I saw you, and since I have been in this carriage, I have heard something which *may* make me

[1] Garland, v. 2, 258, 259.

change my determination. Col. Hamilton will give you a note which will explain it." Hamilton, who was in the carriage with Randolph, when this was said, did afterwards, in the course of the afternoon, hand this note to Benton. It was in these words:

"Information received from Col. Tatnall, since I got into the carriage, *may* induce me to change my mind of not returning Mr. Clay's fire. I seek not his death. I would not have his blood upon my hands—it will not be upon my soul, if shed in self-defense—for the world. He has determined by the use of a long preparatory caution by words to get time to kill me. May I not then disable him? Yes, if I please."

The ground was marked off; and Tatnall won the choice of position, which gave Jesup the right to say "the word." The principals saluted each other courteously, as they took their places on an east and west line, in a little depression; Clay just in front of a small stump; Randolph just in front of a low gravelly bank. Benton was standing on a little hillock nearby, where he could see all that was done and hear all that was said. Near him, was John who had followed him closely, speaking not a word, but evincing the gravest anxiety about his master. Before Randolph took his position, Tatnall had induced him to receive his pistol from him with the hair-trigger sprung, notwithstanding that Randolph had objected to doing so because he was not in the habit of handling a hair-triggered pistol, and was wearing a thick buckskin gloye. What Randolph apprehended, happened. While Jesup, in response to his request, was rehearsing "the word," as it was to be given out, and Randolph was adjusting the butt of his pistol to his hand, with the muzzle pointed downwards almost at the ground, the weapon exploded. Clay's pistol had not then even been handed to him but was being conveyed to him by one of his seconds, Senator Josiah S. Johnston, of Louisiana, who was still several steps from him. As

soon as the explosion took place, Randolph turned to Tatnall and exclaimed: "I protested against the hair-trigger"; whereupon Tatnall assumed all the blame for having sprung the hair. According to Hamilton, at or about the same time, Jesup called out that he would instantly leave the ground with his friend if that occurred again.[1]

A scrutiny began to be made into the circumstances surrounding the explosion, which must have been little less than wormwood to Randolph, when Clay, with the noble generosity which was a part of his nature, cut the inquiry short by the assertion that it was clearly an accident. Another pistol was then handed to Randolph, and an exchange of shots between Clay and him followed. Randolph's bullet struck the stump behind Clay, and Clay's knocked up the earth and gravel behind Randolph, in a line with the level of Randolph's hips. Both bullets, says Benton, were so true and close that it was a marvel how they missed. Benton then felt that it was time for him to interpose, and he joined the group and offered his mediation, but Clay, with the wave of his hand, with which he was accustomed to put aside a trifle, exclaimed: "This is child's play!", and insisted upon another exchange of shots, and Randolph also made the same demand. The seconds were therefore directed to reload. While this was being done, Benton took Randolph aside and importuned him more eagerly even than before to yield to some accommodation; but he found him, he says, more determined than he had ever seen him, and for the first time impatient and seemingly annoyed and dissatisfied at the efforts of Benton to bring the occasion to a peaceful conclusion. "The accidental fire of his pistol preyed upon his feelings. He was doubly chagrined at it, both as a circumstance, susceptible in itself of an unfair interpretation, and as having been the immediate and controlling cause of his

[1] Garland, v. 2, 260

firing at Mr. Clay." It was during this interval that Randolph laid before Benton the facts which had produced the fluctuation of purpose evidenced by the note that Hamilton had handed Benton. At the same time, he declared that in firing he had not sought the life of Clay, that he had not aimed even as high as Clay's knees—for it was no mercy to shoot a man in the knee—that his aim was no higher than Clay's knee-band, and that his only object was to disable him and spoil his aim.

"And then," Benton says, "added with a beauty of expression and a depth of feeling which no studied oratory can ever attain, and which I shall never forget, these impressive words: 'I would not have seen him fall mortally, or even doubtfully, wounded for all the land that is watered by the King of Floods and all his tributary streams.' After uttering these words, and again refusing to explain outside of the Senate any words that he had used in it, and declaring positively that he would not return Clay's fire the next time, Randolph resumed his station opposite to his antagonist. Benton then withdrew a little way into the woods, and kept his eyes fixed on Randolph, knowing that he alone of the two duellists was now in danger. Randolph received Clay's fire which knocked up the gravel in the same place as before, raised his pistol and discharged it in the air, and exclaimed: 'I do not fire at you, Mr. Clay,' and immediately advanced, and tendered his hand to Clay. Clay, in the same spirit, met him half-way, and the two shook hands; Randolph, whose coat skirt had been pierced by Clay's bullet very near the hip, saying jocosely: 'You owe me a coat, Mr. Clay,' and Clay promptly and very happily replying: 'I am glad the debt is no greater.'"[1]

Benton then came up, and, somewhat like the good genius in a novel, who rights everything at the last by a seasonable *éclaircissement*, diffused good humor throughout the group, already joyous enough, by divulging the secret which had been locked up in his breast for eight days. On

[1] *30 Years' View*, by Benton, v. 1, 75, 77.

his way to Washington, he stopped at Randolph's lodgings, and supped with him and his companions. None of the party, he says, had felt the need for dinner that day.[1] In concluding his vivid account of the duel, he indulges in these reflections which we read at the present time in very much the same spirit as that in which we scan the rich suits of mediæval armor in the Metropolitan Museum in New York.

"On Monday, the parties exchanged cards, and social relations were formally and courteously restored. It was about the last high-toned duel that I have witnessed, and among the highest-toned that I have ever witnessed, and so happily conducted to a fortunate issue—a result due to the noble character of the seconds as well as to the generous and heroic spirit of the principals. Certainly, duelling is bad, and has been put down, but not quite so bad as its substitute—revolvers, bowie-knives, blackguarding and street-assassinations under the pretext of self-defense."[2]

Indeed, extinct as is the duel in the United States today, the conduct of all the parties to this famous transaction was so manly and generous that we experience little difficulty in understanding the enthusiasm that it inspired in a connoisseur like Benton, whose interest in it was, it is easy to see, that of a Sir Lucius O'Trigger as well as that of a sincere friend of the two principals. (*a*)

A few days after the duel, Randolph opened his heart to Dr. Brockenbrough in these words:

"I cannot write. I tried yesterday to answer your letter, but I could not do it. My pen *choked*. The *hysterica passio* of poor old Lear came over me. I left a letter for you in case of the worst. It now lies on my mantel-piece. Perhaps, you may, one time or other, see it. I am a fatalist. I am all but friendless.... Benton begins to understand and to love me. Nothing has stood in his way. No lions in his path. Had I

[1] *30 Years' View*, by Benton, v. 1, 77. [2] *Id.*, 77.

suffered it, he would have gone with me, as my friend. In that case, I should not have violated the laws of Virginia. It was not my intention to do so . . . and . . . were ardent, honorable, devoted to my cause, but *obtuse*, wanted *tact*. I am a fatalist. On no one occasion of my life have I ever been in extremity that they, to whom my heart yearned and turned for aid, or at least for comfort, have not appeared to hold aloof from me. I say *appeared*. I am assured that it was appearance only in *both* instances, on the part of the two persons in Virginia, who shared highest in my confidence and regard. But, when a man comes home from the strife and conflict of this wicked world, and its vile and sinful inhabitants, it is then that a certain tone of voice—an averted look—or even the sweet, austere composure of our first mother cuts him to the heart in the reception of the wife of his bosom. The words are nothing; the countenance and the tone of voice, the last especially, everything.

"I again repeat that I cannot write. But I shall be thankful for your letters; as long as I could, I gave you what I had. I too am bankrupt, and have as good a right to break as the rest. God bless you both."[1]

At times, during the first session of the 19th Congress, Randolph made a handsome atonement for his excessive calls upon the attention of his fellow-Senators. In one of his speeches during this session he said: "It is an infirmity of my nature to have an obstinate constitutional preference of the true over the agreeable." His self-introspection in this case was not at fault; for it is his praise above that of any public man of his time of equal perspicacity that, in the earliest stages of the sectional struggle between the North and South, he allowed no suggestion of timidity, personal ambition, or cant to restrain him from fearlessly stating the naked truths underlying the struggle. Take for example what he had to say about negro slavery in his speech on March 2, 1826, on "Negro Slavery in South America":

[1] Garland, v. 2, 261.

"I know there are gentlemen," said Randolph, "not only from the Northern, but from the Southern, States, who think that this unhappy question—for such it is—of negro slavery, which the Constitution has vainly attempted to blink, by not using the term, should never be brought into public notice, more especially into that of Congress, and most especially here. Sir, with every due respect for the gentlemen who think so, I differ from them, *toto coelo*. Sir, it is a thing which cannot be hid—it is not a dry rot that you can cover with the carpet, until the house tumbles about your ears—you might as well try to hide a volcano in full operation—it cannot be hid; it is a cancer in your face, and must be treated *secundum artem;* it must not be tampered with by quacks, who never saw the disease or the patient and prescribe across the Atlantic. It must be, if you will, let alone; but, on this very principle of letting it alone, it is that I have brought in my resolution. I am willing to play what is called child's play—let me alone and I will let you alone; let my resolution alone, and I will say nothing in support of it; for there is a want of sense in saying anything in support of a resolution that nobody opposes. Sir, will the Senate pardon my repeating the words of a great man, which cannot be too often repeated? 'A small danger, menacing an inestimable object, is of more importance, in the eyes of a wise man, than the greatest danger which can possibly threaten an object of minor consequence.' The question before us is, is this an object of inestimable consequence? I do not put the question to you, Sir. I know what your answer will be. I know what will be the answer of every husband, father, son, and brother, throughout the Southern States; I know that on this depends the honor of every matron and maiden—of every matron (wife or widow) between the Ohio and the Gulf of Mexico. I know that upon it depends the life's blood of the little ones which are lying in their cradles, in happy ignorance of what is passing around them; and not the white ones only, for shall not we too kill—shall we not react the scenes which were acted in Guatemala, and elsewhere, except I hope, with far different success; for if, with a superiority in point of numbers, as well as of intelligence and courage, we should suffer ourselves to be, as there, vanquished, we

should deserve to have negroes for our task-masters, and for the husbands of our wives. This, then, is the inestimable object which the gentleman from Carolina views in the same light that I do, and that you do too, Sir, and to which every Southern bosom responds;—a chord which, when touched, even by the most delicate hand, vibrates to the heart of every man in our country. I wish I could maintain, with truth, that it came within the other predicament—that it is a small danger, but it is a great danger; it is a danger that has increased, is increasing, and *must* be diminished, or it must come to its regular catastrophe."[1]

Though in a different vein, a passage in a speech on Executive Powers delivered by Randolph on March 30, 1826, is equally good. When his last speeches on the tariff were delivered in the House, the policy of protection was obnoxious to Massachusetts. "I bless God," he said, "that Massachusetts and old Virginia are once again rallying under the same banner against oppressive and unconstitutional taxation."[2] But, when his speech on "Executive Powers" was delivered, he had fully awakened to the fact that political alliances of this kind are so closely akin to amorous intercourse, in point of inconstancy, that the language of the latter would serve as well for the former. Massachusetts had gone over to Henry Clay, and the doctrine of American Protection, taking Daniel Webster along with her.

"But I did immediately after this transaction," [the support given by Henry Clay to Webster in the discussion of the Greek Question], Randolph said, "write a letter to a friend which letter, with its postmark and date, can now be produced, stating that, according to my view of things, an alliance, offensive and defensive, had been got up between old Massachusetts and Kentucky, between the frost of January and young, blythe, buxom and blooming May, the eldest daughter

[1] *Reg. of Deb.* 1825–26, v. 2, part 1, 117.
[2] *A. of C.*, 1823-24, v. 2, 2379.

of Virginia, young Kentucky, not so young however as not to make a prudent match and sell her charms for their full value. I had been an eye and ear witness of the billing and cooing between the old sinner and the young saint, and had no doubt that the consummation would in a *decent* time be effected."[1]

The application of this clever ridicule to the "corrupt bargain" between Clay and Adams is too manifest for comment. How mixed were the sensations exerted by the brilliancy, the garrulity, the irrelevancy, the eccentricity and the extravagance which distinguished Randolph's speeches in the Senate, during the first session of the 19th Congress, when his mind was unquestionably disordered, we may judge by contrasting a letter from a Washington correspondent, which appeared in the *Richmond Enquirer* on April 25, 1826, and the evidence, presented by an editorial, which appeared in the same newspaper three days later.

The letter says:

"Randolph delivered yesterday the greatest speech of his life and, as he said, the last of this session. The like of it was never seen, heard nor *felt* before. He spoke for six complete hours from one to seven. For six hours, he filled his vials from the fountains of bitterness—filled them to overflowing—and emptied them on heads high and low. For six hours, he trod the wine-press of indignant wrath; for six hours the Senate and a brilliant audience were fixed as the marble columns which supported the dome of the chamber. The stenographer was busy, but in vain. It is not for paper to *tell* that speech."

The editorial said:

"Mr. Randolph's zeal and intrepidity have drawn a fiery wasp's nest around his head. He has been exhibited in almost every variety of shape to excite detestation or contempt. He has been painted as a madman—as a malignant—as a dotard—

[1] *Reg. of Debates*, 1825–26, v. 2, part 1, 395.

in fact what animadversion has been spared to him? They have tried even to lie him down—little anecdotes have been circulated to render him ridiculous."

On May 20, 1826, Randolph boarded a steamboat at Philadelphia, which conveyed him to the packet, *Alexander*, Capt. Baldwin. A large crowd had gathered at the wharf in Baltimore in 1824 to see him off for New York on his second voyage to Europe; but the increased public curiosity, of which he was now the object, because of his chequered career in the United States Senate and his recent duel with Henry Clay, one of the popular idols, assembled such "an immense concourse" at the steamboat landing that, to avoid the throng, that rushed after him into the cabin of the steamboat, he had to take refuge in the ladies' cabin.[1]

On his arrival at Liverpool, Randolph was detained there for a time by public attentions of one kind or another. At a dinner given by the Corporation of Liverpool to Huskisson, its representative in Parliament, his health was proposed by Huskisson, and he responded in what seems to have been a very happy speech; taking care to accentuate the community of interest which existed between the cotton planter of America and the cotton spinner of England, and following up his speech with two toasts: "The Town and Trade of Liverpool," and "England and America, the mother and the daughter." Afterwards, he accompanied Huskisson on a steam-packet excursion and, his health being again proposed by that gentleman on this excursion, he delivered another speech which seems to have been cordially received. It is said that, during the excursion, he talked "incessantly and instructed as well as delighted the company," and many of his pithy remarks, including his opinion that the Irish peasant was deprived of his proper share of the

[1] *Richm. Enq.*, May 26, 1826.

fruits of the earth, and his opinion that the Virginians would as soon have their noses cut off as abandon *viva voce* voting, were reported in the English press. "Then, Sir," said one gentleman to him, "your mode of voting is the same as in England?" "Aye, to be sure," replied Randolph. "Have we not been steering on the same course ever since we left you without touching or taking in sail? Only we have thrown the King overboard, God bless him." So fascinating, we are told, was Randolph's conversation that he could with difficulty escape from the crowd that still lingered about him at the close of the day. From the same source of information, we learn, quite in keeping with modern reportorial methods, that he was "dressed in a blue coat, yellow silk neckcloth, and blue trousers."[1] Then, doubtless, as now, the kind of American, who interested an Englishman the most, was the kind that resembled the average Englishman the least. From Great Britain, Randolph passed to the Continent, and, during his travels abroad at this time, he wrote a number of letters to Dr. Brockenbrough from which we shall make a few extracts:

"HOLKHAM, Sunday, July 16th, 1826.

"A month has now elapsed since I landed in England, during which time I have not received a line from any friend, except Benton, who wrote to me on the eve of his departure from Babylon the Great to Missouri. Missouri!, and here am I writing in the parlor of the New Inn, at the gate of Mr. Coke's park, where art has mastered nature in one of her least amiable moods. To say the truth, he that would see this country to advantage must not end with the barren sands and flat, infertile healths (strike out the *l*; I meant to write heaths) of the east country, but must reserve the vale of Severn and Wales for a *bonne bouche*. Although I was told at Norwich that Mr. Coke was at home (and by a particular friend of his too), yet I find that he and Lady Anne are gone to the very

[1] *Niles Reg.*, vol. 6, 3d series, 394, 395.

extremity of this huge county to a wool fair, at Thetford, sixty-five miles off; and, while my companion, Mr. Williams, of S. C. (son of David R. W.), is gone to the Hall, I am resolved to bestow, if not 'all,' a part at least of 'my tediousness' upon you. Tediousness, indeed, for what have I to write about, unless to tell you that my health, so far from getting better, was hardly ever worse? . . . Mr. Williams has been very attentive and kind to me. I have been trying to persuade him to abandon me to the underwriters as a total loss, but he will not desert me; so that I meditate giving him the slip for his own sake. We saw Dudley Inn and a bad race at Newmarket, on our way to Norwich. There we embarked on the river Yare, and proceeded to Yarmouth by the steampacket. We returned to Norwich by land, and by different routes; he, by the direct road, and I, by *Beccles*, fifteen miles further; and yet I arrived first. Through Lord Suffield's politeness, who gave me a most hearty invitation to Gunton, I was enabled to see the Castle (now the county jail) to the best advantage. His lordship is a great prison discipline financier, and was very polite to me when I was in England four years ago. I met him by mere accident at the inn at Norwich, where the coach from Beccles stopped. . . .

I see that Ritchie has come out against me. I looked for nothing better. But why talk of such things?" . . .

"THE HAGUE, Tuesday, August 8, 1826.

"'The Portfolio reached me in safety.' So much had I written of a letter to you in London, but I was obliged to drop my pen in G. Marx' compting-house, and here I am, and at your service at The Hague. . . .

"In my passage from London, I met with a serious accident, that might have been fatal. We broke our engine, and, when the pilot boarded us, I was desirous to get on board of his boat; to do this, I had to cross the quarter-deck. The skylight of the ladies' cabin was open, but (*pour bienséance*) the 'orifice' was covered with our colors, and the grating, being removed only about 18 inches, a complete pit-fall or trap was made, into which I fell, and my right side, immediately below the insertion of the false ribs into the spine, was 'brought up by the

combings of the sky-light.' I lay for some minutes nearly senseless, and it was more than an hour before I could be moved from the deck. My whole side, kidney and liver, are very much affected. It has obliged me to suspend my course of Swain's Panacea, upon which I entered a few days before I left London.

"I have not seen Mr. Gallatin. Mr. John A. King, our *chargé d'affaires*, was very polite to me. We met on neutral ground at the Traveller's Club-House, in Pall Mall, No. 49.

"I am pleased with Holland. Cleanliness here becomes a virtue. My companion's, Mr. Wms', passport wanting some formularies, and our *chargé* (Mr. C. Hughes! oh for some of Giles' notes of admiration!!!!) not being present, Sir Charles Bagot has been good enough to do the needful. I waited upon him in Mr. Wms' behalf, and was received by him with the greatest warmth, asked to dine *en famille* (as I leave The Hague to-morrow for Leyden), and told that any letters brought to [the] dinner would be forwarded by his courier to London. To him, therefore, I am obliged for a conveyance for this.

"*Apropos* to Giles; I think I know him to the bottom, if he has any bottom. I know also the advantage that will be taken of me; the formidable array of enemies that I have to encounter. I might have neutralized some of them; but, as Bonaparte said on another occasion, 'it is not in my character.' Whatever may be the decision of the Virginia Assembly on my case, I shall always say that a capricious change of her public agents has never been the vice of the Government or the people of Virginia, and that, whenever a man is dismissed from the service of either, it is strong presumptive evidence (*prima facie*) of his unfitness for the place. . . .

"Your intelligence about the election, about W. S. A., [Wm. S. Archer] and W. R. J., [Wm. R. Johnson] and W. B. G., [Wm. B. Giles] was highly gratifying. I hope that my *initials* are intelligible to you, for your Miss S., upon whom you say Mr. M. D. was attending, is *une inconnue à moi*. I did not know that you had any Richmond Belles, of whom the Beaux could say, 'I love my love with an S., because' &c., &c.

"Poor Stevenson, I think, has no daughter, or child, even.

Remember me kindly to him and the Lord Chief, and do not forget my *best* love and duty to madame. Tell her, and mark it yourself, that you at home may and can write long gossiping letters, but a man at the end of a journey, harassed by a *valet de place*, and *commissionaire pour le passeporte*, has no stomach but for his coffee and bed. Such is my case (this day excepted, and even today I am a good deal wearied by a jaunt to Scheveling, and Mr. Wms' business); and such has it been since I set my foot on the quay at Liverpool.

"And so old Mr. Adams is dead; on the 4th of July, too, just half a century after our Declaration of Independence; and leaving his son on the throne. This is Euthanasia, indeed. They have killed Mr. Jefferson, too, on the same day, but I don't believe it. . . .

"Pray, has the *Enquirer* come out against me? I see something that looks like it in the matter of Mr. D., of M——s. *Le vrai n'est pas toujours le vraisemblable.* There is a *dessous de cartes* there, that is not understood. But who does really understand anything? The English know us only through the medium of New York and Yankee newspapers, and, which is worse, through the Yankees themselves. The only Virginia papers, that I saw at the North and South American Coffee House, were the *Norfolk Beacon*, ditto *Herald*, and *Richmond Whig*. They don't take the *Enquirer*. What a pretty notion they must have of us in Virginia. Adieu for the present."

"PALL MALL, Sept. 22, 1826. Friday.

. . . . . .

"It is now agreed on all hands that misery, crime and profligacy are in a state of rapid and alarming increase. The Pitt and paper system (for although he did not begin it, yet he brought it to its last stage of imperfection) is now developing features that 'fright the isle from its propriety.'

"Your letter reached me in Paris where I was in a measure compelled to go, in consequence of my having incautiously set my foot in that huge man-trap, France. I had there neither time nor opportunity to answer it, and now I have not power to do it. The dinner to M. does, I confess, not a little surprise me. I know not what to think of these times, and of the state

of things in our country. The vulgarity and calumny of the press I could put up with, if I could see any tokens of that manly, straight-forward spirit and manner that once distinguished Virginia. Sincerity and truth are so far out of fashion that nobody nowadays seems to expect them in the intercourse of life. But I am becoming censorious, and how can I help it in this canting and speaking age, where the very children are made to cry or laugh as a well drilled recruit shoulders or grounds his firelock.

"I dined yesterday with Mr. Marx—it was a private party—and took additional cold. This morning, my expectoration is quite bloody, but I do not apprehend that it comes from the lungs. It is disagreeable, however, not only in itself, but because I have promised my Lord Chief Justice Best to visit him at his seat in Kent, and another gentleman, also, in the same county; '*invicta*,' unconquered Kent."

"PALL MALL, October 13, 1826.

. . . . . .

"Mr. W. J. Barksdale writes his father that a *run* will be made at me by G——s [Giles] this winter. On this subject, I can only repeat what I have said before—that, when the Commonwealth of Virginia dismisses a servant, it is strong presumptive evidence of his unfitness for the station. If it shall apply to my own case, I cannot help it. But I should have nothing to wish on this subject, if the Assembly could be put in possession of a tolerably faithful account of what I have said and done. I have been systematically and industriously misrepresented. I had determined to devote this last summer to a revision of my speeches, but my life would have paid the forfeit, had I persisted in that determination. Many of the misrepresentations proceed from the 'ineffable stupidity' of the reporters, but some must, I think, be intentional. . . . In most instances, my meaning has been mistaken. In some, it has been reversed. If I live, I will set this matter right. So much for *Ego*.

"I see that Peyton R. advertises his land on —— River. This was the last of my name and race left whom I would go and see. The ruin is no doubt complete. . . .

"Town is empty, and I live, a complete hermit, in London. If you see the English newspapers, you will see what a horrible state of society exists in this strange country, where one class is dying of hunger and another with surfeit. The amount of crime is fearful; and cases of extreme atrocity are not wanting. The ministry will not find themselves upon a bed of roses when Parliament meets."[1]

With the beginning of the second session of the 19th Congress, Randolph was again in his seat in the Senate, but, during the winter, he took no part in the debates of that body. It soon became apparent that his reëlection to the Senate might not be unopposed. On Jan. 1, 1827, he wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough:

"To pretend indifference to the approaching election, would be the height of affectation and falsehood; but, go how it may, I trust that I shall bear myself under success or defeat in a manner that my friends will not disapprove. I have ever looked up to Virginia as to a mother whose rebukes I was bound to receive with filial submission; and no instance of her displeasure, however severe, shall ever cause me to lose sight of my duty to her."[2]

A few days before the election, Ritchie stated in the *Richmond Enquirer* that the reëlection of Randolph would not be contested.[3] An effort to induce Philip P. Barbour to become a candidate had failed; similar approaches had been made to John Floyd, and had met with no encouragement; and it was understood that John Tyler, too, had withheld his countenance from a movement in his behalf, on the ground that the State-Rights party was too small to be weakened by divisions.[4] But, on the very day that Ritchie made his statement, he learned that opposition to the reëlection of Randolph was brewing, and that Tyler would be brought forward as his opponent.[5] The ele-

[1] Garland, v. 2, 269, 275.
[2] *Id.*, 279.
[3] *Richm. Enq.*, Jan. 16, 1827.
[4] *Ibid.*
[5] *Ibid.*

ments, constituting the opposition in the Legislature, were all the members, with one or two exceptions perhaps, who had once been Federalists, the friends of the Adams administration, the friends of Henry Clay, and the Republicans who were enemies of the Adams administration, but had been induced by the eccentric conduct of Randolph in the Senate to believe that he should not be returned to that body.[1] It was also thought by Ritchie that some four or five votes might have been turned against Randolph by a correspondence between certain Republican members of the House of Delegates and John Tyler which had been read in the House.[2] (*a*) This correspondence was initiated by a letter to Tyler, dated Jan. 13, 1827, and signed by Linn Banks, Alexander Smyth, Wm. F. Gordon, Daniel A. Wilson and Wm. O. Goode, which read in part as follows:

"We understand that the friends of the administration and others will support you for the Senate in opposition to Mr. Randolph. We desire to understand distinctly whether they have your consent or not; and, if not, will you be pleased to say explicitly that you will not abandon the Chair of State at this time to accept a seat in the Senate?"[3]

To this letter Tyler replied that he was unacquainted with the political preferences of those disposed to sustain him for the Senate; that his political opinions on the fundamental principles of the Government were the same as the opinions espoused by Randolph, that he admired him most highly for his undeviating attachment to the Constitution, manifested at all times, and through all the events of a long, political life, and that, if any man voted for him under a different persuasion, he would most grievously deceive himself, that he had constantly opposed himself to all solicitations that he should become a candidate against Randolph, and desired most earnestly to be

[1] *Richm. Enq.*, Jan. 16, 1827. [2] *Ibid.* [3] *Ibid.*

JOHN RANDOLPH

Taken from picture owned by John Stewart Bryan, Richmond, Va.

left at peace, that there was no consideration, either political or private, which could lead him to desire the office, and that, from the first to the last, everywhere, and to all, with whom he had conversed, this had been his uniform language. Tyler, however, declined to say categorically whether he would abandon the Chair of State, at that time, to accept a seat in the Senate. Should the office, he said, in opposition to his wishes (a result which he could not anticipate), be conferred upon him, he would then give to the expression of the legislative will such reflection, and pronounce such decision, as his sense of what was due to it might seem to require.[1] All of which, of course, was simply a dignified way of saying that, if Chance would have him King, why Chance might crown him.

When the election came on in the House, the relative merits of Randolph and Tyler were freely discussed by their respective partisans, and the speech of Samuel McD. Moore, of Rockbridge, especially gives us a very good idea of the animus of the fight against Randolph at this time, and of the grotesque absurdities about him, to which Rumor, always a more or less mendacious slut in his case, had recently given tongue. "The Senate of the United States," said Mr. Moore, "had been the most august and dignified body in the world until Mr. Randolph was elected to it. . . . But, if the accounts of Mr. Randolph's conduct in that body were to be believed, it no longer possessed that dignity and elevation of character. On one occasion, it was said, he strewed his papers all over the floor, and prohibited anybody from touching them; on another, he undressed and dressed himself in the Senate chamber." Mr. Randolph, he said, drank to an excess and cut the capers of a Merry Andrew. Could any gentleman, he asked, find an apology for conduct like this? Was it owing to excitement or drink? If to excitement, he was mad; if to drink, he was drunk.[2]

[1] *Richm. Enq.*, Jan. 16, 1827. [2] *Ibid.*

On the ballot which followed the discussion of the candidates, the vote was as follows: Tyler, 115, Randolph, 110, scattering, 2, blank, 1; so that Tyler was declared elected and a committee appointed to notify him of his election.[1] In the judgment of Ritchie, the number of Adams and Clay men who voted for Tyler were only 30.[2]

In one respect, at any rate, Randolph's defeat for re-election to the Senate served only to bring out into clear relief the conspicuous station that his advocacy of Southern interests had won for him. Commenting on his defeat, Ritchie, the renowned editor, who had denounced him in 1811 as a "nuisance and a curse," used these remarkable words:

"But we would have humbly preferred John Randolph to any other man. The Legislature had previously taken him from the citizens of his District and placed him in the Senate. Whatever had been his transgressions, they had passed a sort of Act of Amnesty over him. He was in the office, he had warred with the coalition at Washington in a manner which had carried dismay into their ranks. Whatever were the errors into which the excess of his sensibility had betrayed him, (*a*) he had defended the ramparts of the constitution with a zeal which never wavered and an eloquence which none could equal. He seemed in some respects the very man who was called for by the occasion. Corruption had cowered beneath him, and the panders of public abuses were shrinking under the matchless powers of the modern Chatham."[3]

And how did the irascible, high-strung man who had received such a stinging blow in the face deport himself when the newsboys were crying the freshly received news of his defeat on the streets of Washington, and exultant friends of the administration in the House were rushing over to the Senate Chamber to witness his look of abject humiliation? There can be but one answer: as a gallant

[1] *Richm. Enq.*, Jan. 16, 1827.
[2] *Id.*, Aug. 21, 1827.
[3] *Ibid.*, Jan. 16. 1827

gentleman, whose pride of character is too deep-seated to be abased or mortified by any vicissitudes of fortune that his own brave, upright spirit is powerless to surmount. Throughout the second session of the 19th Congress, with the scrupulous delicacy which belonged to his system of political ethics, Randolph had refrained from making a speech in the Senate, though urged by his friends to do so, because he said it became neither himself nor his station to make one merely for electioneering effect.[1] And now on the very day that he learned of his defeat, and when the eyes of his triumphant enemies were eagerly fastened upon him, he rose from his seat in the Senate, and delivered a speech, of which a correspondent of the *Richmond Enquirer* at once wrote to that publication in the following terms:

"To us, however, he appeared as a man who had been honored, not disgraced, and, when the bill came up for increasing the compensation of the Post-Master General, he spoke upon it with a dignity of manner, beauty of expression and force and propriety of argument which charmed and delighted his friends."[2]

A day or so later, in a letter to Dr. Brockenbrough, Randolph spoke of his defeat in the same spirit of manly resignation:

"Your most welcome letter of Wednesday is just now received. Every syllable in the way of anecdote is gratifying in a high degree.

"My first impression was to resign. There were, notwithstanding, obvious and strong objections to this course; my duty to my friends, the giving of a handle to the charges of my enemies that I was the slave of spleen and passion, and many more that I need not specify. There was but one other course left, and that I have taken, not without the decided approbation of my colleague, and many other friends here. I

[1] *Richm. Enq.*, Jan. 20, 1827. [2] *Ibid.*

find, too, that it was heartily desired by my enemies that I should throw up my seat. They even propagated a report on Monday that I had done so in a rage, and left the City. Numerous concurring opinions of men of sense and judgment, who have had no opportunity of consulting together, have reached me, that fortify me in the line of conduct that I have taken. Nothing then remains but a calm and dignified submission to the disgrace that has been put upon me. It is the best evidence that I can give my friends of the sense which I feel, and will for ever cherish, of their kind and generous support."[1]

And, when the victor in the senatorial contest came to Washington to take his seat, Randolph recognized the fact that Tyler's conduct in the contest had been marked by perfect propriety and decorum, and promptly called upon him. "I have been well received in the Senate," Tyler wrote to Dr. Henry Curtis. "Mr. Randolph's health is very bad; he can only speak in whispers. He called on me three days ago, and I shall return his visit probably today."[2] A little later, Tyler wrote to his daughter, Mary Tyler: "Tell your mother that I returned Mr. Randolph's visit and was received in a style somewhat stately but entirely respectful; since when I have received another card from him. He conversed in a low whisper and said that he labored under pulmonary consumption."[3] Indeed, before Tyler came to Washington to take his seat, Randolph had already availed himself of the first opportunity to assure him that the Senatorial contest had been too fair and honorable to leave any resentment on his part behind it. This opportunity arose at the races near Richmond which both Tyler and Randolph were attending. "As soon as Randolph saw Tyler, he advanced towards him with outstretched hand and exclaimed:

[1] Garland, v. 2, 283.
[2] Dec. 16, 1827, *Letters, &c., of the Tylers*, by Lyon G. Tyler, v. 1, 380.
[3] Dec. 26, 1827, *Id.*, 389.

'And how is your Excellency? and when I say your Excellency, I mean your Excellency!'"[1]

In many quarters, however, the defeat of Randolph evoked expressions of bitter party animosity and personal disappointment; and the Jackson zealots made it the occasion for the disinterment of a letter which Tyler had written to Henry Clay in the spring of 1825, approving of the aid that Clay had given in the election of John Quincy Adams in the Presidential contest in the House.[2]

A few days after the election of Tyler, an assembly of citizens of Fauquier County adopted resolutions expressing their mortification at the thought that the vigilant public sentinel, able, faithful, consistent, long-tried and untiring advocate of the people's cause and opponent of the usurpations of the Adams administration, John Randolph, should have been made to give place to any person.[3] Indeed, the temper of the meeting ran so high that the three representatives of Fauquier County in the Legislature felt that it was necessary for them to publish a statement affirming that they had voted for Randolph. On the same day, at a meeting of the freeholders of Cumberland County, resolutions were adopted, requesting Randolph to become a candidate for his old seat in the House.[4] Similar resolutions were shortly afterwards adopted by the freeholders or citizens of Prince Edward and Charlotte Counties.[5]

Dr. George William Crump, the actual incumbent of Randolph's former seat in the House, had already anticipated these meetings by publishing a letter in which he had declared his willingness to unite with the other freeholders of Charlotte, Buckingham, Prince Edward and

[1] *Tylers' Mag.*, v. 2, No. 2, Oct., 1920, 140.
[2] *Life, etc., of the Tylers*, v., 1369.
[3] *Richm. Enq.*, Jan. 30, 1827.
[4] *Id.*, Jan. 27, 1827.
[5] *Id.*, Feb. 24, 1827, Mar. 13, 1827.

Cumberland Counties in summoning Randolph again to his former station.[1]

When Randolph was returning to Roanoke from Congress in March, 1827, a public dinner was tendered to him at Norfolk; which he declined. Another, to which he was invited by a number of the freeholders and citizens of Prince Edward County, he was unable to attend on account of illness,

"which only leaves me power," he said, "to express my high sense of the honor done me and my regret at being unable to partake of the hospitality and festivity of my Prince Edward friends, to whom I am bound by every tie that can unite me to the kindest and most indulgent constituents that ever man had."[2]

In addition to being toasted on still other occasions, he was, when making his way back to Roanoke, tendered by his friends in the Virginia Legislature a public dinner at Richmond. The invitation to this dinner he felt bound to accept, and he delivered a brief speech on the occasion in which he said among other things that he did not expect his auditors to judge of his principles from any declamations that he might see fit to make instead of inferring them from the acts of his public life which had commenced in the last century and had terminated but a few days before.[3] But terminated his fond constituents would not permit his public life to be, and, at the ensuing Congressional election in April, 1827, he was reëlected to the House practically by acclamation.[4] And when he resumed his old seat in Congress, with deadly effect indeed did he bruise the head of those who had only bruised his heel. During the remainder of the administration of John Quincy Adams, he was virtually the leader of the opposition to it, and so effectively did he strike it, hip and thigh,

[1] *Richm. Enq.*, Jan. 20, 1827.
[2] *Id.*, Apr. 20, 1827.
[3] Garland, v. 2, 290.
[4] *Ibid.*

so long as there was the slightest prospect of John Quincy Adams being his own successor, that the hatred of the Adams family for him, which began with John Adams, has been kept alive from generation to generation ever since like a vestal fire. During the period, when the National Republicans, of whom the President was the chief, were in a minority, and had no resource left except that of casting the responsibility for all legislation upon the majority Republicans, who had now come to call themselves Democrats, Randolph counselled the policy of "a wise and masterly inactivity,"[1] as he termed it, in regard to legislation, accompanied by incessant attacks upon the administration.

The opposition, headed by Randolph, proved supremely successful; though but for the black bile, that suffused John Quincy Adams's own malignant relations to his enemies or even ordinary rivals, the biographer of Randolph might well pause to condemn in proper terms the indiscriminate acerbity with which he censured everything said or done by a man whose many sterling traits of character and varied accomplishments, whatever may be said of some of his acrid and repellent attributes, are conspicuously worthy of respect. Of the part that Randolph had in pulling Adams down, there can be no doubt. Replying to his own question, "Who is it that manifested this feeling of proscription towards us and our posterity?," Vance, of Ohio, a supporter of the Adams administration, said on Jan. 29, 1828, in the House, during the debate on Retrenchment and Reform:

"Sir, it is the man who is now at the head of the opposition to this administration; it is the man who was placed by you, Sir, at the head of the principal committee of this House. Yes, sir, he was placed there by aid of the vote of the very people that he has derided and abused; and, if ill-health had not prevented, would have been in that exalted station. It is

[1] *Reg. of Debates*, 1827–28, v. 4, part 1, 1170.

the man that is entitled to more credit—if it is right that this administration should go down—for his efficiency in effecting that object than any three men in this nation. This is not a hasty opinion of mine; it is one long held and often expressed. I have been an attentive observer of his course ever since the first organization of the party to which he belongs. From the moment he took his seat in the other branch of the Legislature, he became the great rallying-officer of the South. Our Southern brethren were made to believe that we, of the North, were political fiends ready to oppress them with heavy and onerous duties, and even willing to destroy that property they held most sacred. Sir, these are not exaggerated statements relative to the course of this distinguished individual. He is certainly the ablest political recruiting sergeant that has been in this or any other country."[1]

Another member of the House, Wright, of Ohio, said in the same discussion that he considered Randolph

"the commanding general of the opposition force and occupying the position of a commander in the rear of his troops; controlling their movements; issuing his orders; directing one subaltern where and how to move his forces; admonishing another to due and proper caution and to follow his leader; nodding approbation to a third, and prompting him to extraordinary exertion."[2] (*a*)

During the first session of the 20th Congress, Randolph frequently took part in the debates in the House, and, at times, with a degree of strength and point which reminds us of his hey-day. The best known of his speeches at this session was the one which he delivered on Retrenchment and Reform. These subjects were a mere mask for his real purpose, which was to drag down John Quincy Adams and glorify Andrew Jackson. The speech is desultory in character, as a whole, and, now and then, it is unpardonably malevolent; (*b*) but it has the quality of which Ran-

[1] *Reg. of Deb.*, 1827–28, v. 4, part 1, 1226. [2] *Id.*, 1450.

dolph was so covetous; that is to say, to use his own phrase, "it tickles under the tail"; and there is not a dull word in it, a thing that can be said of very, very few speeches. What could be cleverer or better suited to their object than these observations upon the charge that Andrew Jackson, who was expected to be a candidate for the Presidency against Adams at the next election, was an illiterate man?

"'But General Jackson is no statesman.'" "Sir, I deny that there is any instance on record in history of a man, not having military capacity, being at the head of any government with advantage to that government and with credit to himself. There is a great mistake on this subject. It is not those talents which enable a man to write books and make speeches that qualify him to preside over a government. The wittiest of poets has told us that

> 'All a Rhetorician's rules
> Teach only how to name his tools.'

"We have seen Professors of Rhetoric who could no doubt descant fluently upon the use of these said tools; yet sharpen them to so wiry an edge as to cut their own fingers with these implements of their trade. Thomas à Becket was as brave a man as Henry the Second, and, indeed, a braver man—less infirm of purpose. And who were the Hildebrands and the rest of the Papal freebooters who achieved victory after victory over the proudest monarchs and states of Christendom? These men were brought up in a cloister, perhaps, but they were endowed with that highest of all the gifts of heaven, the capacity to lead men, whether in the Senate or the field. Sir, it is one and the same faculty, and its successful display has always received, and ever will receive, the highest honors that man can bestow; and this will be the case, do what you will, cant what you may, about military chieftains and military domination. So long as man is man, the victorious defender of his country will, and ought, to receive that

country's suffrage for all that the forms of her government allow her to give.

"A friend said to me not long since. 'Why, General Jackson can't write.' 'Admitted'; pray, Sir, can you tell me of any one that can write?; for I protest I know nobody that can. Then, turning to my friend, I said: 'It is most true that General Jackson cannot write' (not that he can't write his name, or a letter, &c.) 'because he has never been taught; but his competitor cannot write because he was not teachable'; for he has had every advantage of education and study. Sir, the Duke of Marlborough, the greatest captain and negotiator of his age, which was the age of Louis XIV, and who may rank with the greatest men of any age; whose irresistible manners and address triumphed over every obstacle in council, as his military prowess and conduct did in the field; this great man could not even spell, and was notoriously ignorant of all that an undergraduate must know, but which it is not necessary for a man at the head of affairs to know at all. Would you have superseded him by some Scotch schoolmaster? Gentlemen forget that it is an able helmsman we want for the ship of State, and not a professor of Navigation or Astronomy.

"Sir, among the vulgar errors that ought to go into Sir Thomas Browne's book, this ought not to be omitted: that learning and wisdom are not synonymous, or at all equivalent. Knowledge and wisdom, as one of our most delightful poets sings;

> 'Knowledge and wisdom, far from being one,
> Have oft times no connexion—Knowledge dwells
> In heads replete with thoughts of other men;
> Wisdom in minds attentive to their own.
> Knowledge is proud that he has learned so mucn;
> Wisdom is humble that he knows no more.
> Books are not seldom talismans and spells,
> By which the magic art of shrewder wits
> Holds the unthinking multitude enchained.'

"And not books only, Sir—speeches are not less deceptive. I not only consider the want of what is called learning not to

be a disqualification for the command in chief in civil or military life, but I do consider the possession of too much learning to be of most mischievous consequence to such a character; who is to draw from the cabinet of his own sagacious mind, and to make the learning of others, or whatever other qualities they may possess, subservient to his more enlarged and vigorous views. Such a man was Cromwell; such a man was Washington. Not learned, but wise. Their understandings were not clouded or cramped, but had fair play. Their errors were the errors of men, not of school boys and pedants. So far from the want of what is called education being a very strong objection to a man at the head of affairs, over-education constitutes a still stronger objection. (In the case of a lady, it is fatal. Heaven defend me from an over-educated, accomplished lady. Yes, accomplished indeed, for she is *finished* for all the duties of a wife, or mother, or mistress of a family.) . . .

"There is a class of men who possess great learning, combined with inveterate professional habits, and who are *ipso facto*, or perhaps I should rather say *ipsis factis*, for I must speak accurately, as I speak before a professor [Edward Everett], disqualified for any but secondary parts anywhere—even in the cabinet. Cardinal Richelieu was what? A priest. Yes, but what a priest! Oxenstiern was a chancellor. He it was who sent his son abroad to see—*quam parva sapientia regitur mundus*—with how little wisdom this world is governed. This administration seemed to have thought that even less than little would do for us. The gentleman called it a strong, an able cabinet, second to none but Washington's first cabinet. I could hardly look at him for blushing. What! Sir, is Gallatin at the head of the Treasury? Madison in the Department of State? The mind of an accomplished and acute dialectician, of an able lawyer, or, if you please, of a great physician, may, by the long continuance of one pursuit, of one train of ideas, have its habits so inveterately fixed as effectually to disqualify the possessor for the command of the councils of a country. He may, nevertheless, make an admirable chief of a bureau, an excellent man of details, which the chief ought never to be. A man may be capable of making an able and ingenious argument on any subject within the sphere of his knowledge; but,

every now and then, the master sophist will start, as I have seen him start, at the monstrous conclusions to which his own artificial reasoning had brought himself. But this was a man of more than ordinary natural candor and fairness of mind. Sir, by words and figures you may prove just what you please; but it often and most generally is the fact that, in proportion as a proposition is logically or mathematically true, so is it politically and commonsensically (or rather nonsensically) false. The talent, which enables a man to write a book or make a speech, has no more relation to the leading of an army or a Senate than it has to the dressing of a dinner. The talent, which fits a man for either office, is the talent for the management of men. A mere dialectician never had, and never will have, it; each requires the same degree of courage, though of different kinds. The very highest degree of moral courage is required for the duties of Government. I have been amused when I have seen some dialecticians, after asserting their words—'the counters of wise men, the money of fools'—after they had laid down their premises, and drawn, step by step, their deductions, sit down, completely satisfied, as if the conclusions, to which they had brought themselves, were really the truth; as if it were irrefragably true. But wait until another cause is called, or till another court sits; till the bystanders and jury have had time to forget both argument and conclusion, and they will make you just as good an argument on the other side, and arrive with the same complacency at a directly opposite conclusion, and triumphantly demand your assent to this new truth. Sir, it is their business. I do not blame them. I only say that such a habit of mind unfits men for action; for decision. They want a client to decide for them which side to take; and the really great man performs that office. This habit unfits them for Government in the first degree. The talent for Government lies in these two things, sagacity to perceive, and decision to act. Genuine statesmen were never made such by mere training; *nascuntur non fiunt*—; education will form good business men. The maxim (*nascitur non fit*) is as true of statesmen as it is of poets. Let a house be on fire, you will soon see in that confusion who has the talent to command. Let a ship be in

danger at sea, and ordinary subordination destroyed, and you will immediately make the same discovery. The ascendancy of mind and of character exists and rises as naturally and as inevitably, where there is free play for it, as material bodies find their level by gravitation. Thus a great logician, like a certain animal, oscillating between the hay on different sides of him, wants some power from without, before he can decide from which bundle to make a trial. Who believes that Washington could write as good a book or report as Jefferson, or make as able a speech as Hamilton? Who is there that believes that Cromwell would have made as good a Judge as Lord Hale? No, Sir; these learned and accomplished men find their proper place under those who are fitted to command, and to command them among the rest. Such a man as Washington will say to a Jefferson, do you become my Secretary of State; to Hamilton, do you take charge of my purse, or that of the nation, which is the same thing; and to Knox, do you be my master of the horse. All history shows this; but great logicians and great scholars are for that very reason unfit to be rulers. Would Hannibal have crossed the Alps when there were no roads, with elephants, in the face of the warlike and hardy mountaineers, and have carried terror to the very gates of Rome if his youth had been spent in poring over books? Would he have been able to maintain himself on the resources of his own genius for sixteen years in Italy, in spite of faction and treachery in the Senate of Carthage, if he had been deep in conic sections and fluxions, and the differential calculus; to say nothing of botany, and mineralogy, and chemistry? 'Are you not ashamed,' said a philosopher to one who was born to rule; 'are you not ashamed to play so well upon the flute?' Sir, it was well put. There is much which it becomes a secondary man to know; much that it is necessary for him to know that a first rate man ought to be ashamed to know. No head was ever clear and sound that was stuffed with book learning. You might as well attempt to fatten and strengthen a man by stuffing him with every variety and the greatest quantity of food. After all, the chief must draw upon his subalterns for much that he does not know, and cannot perform himself. My friend, William R. Johnson, has many a

groom that can clean and dress a race horse, and ride him, too, better than he can. But what of that? Sir, we are, in the European sense of the term, not a military people. We have no business for an army; it hangs as a dead weight upon the nation—officers and all. All that we hear of it is through pamphlets, indicating a spirit that, if I was at the head of affairs, I should very speedily put down. A state of things that never could have grown up under a man of decision of character at the head of the State or the department; a man possessing *the spirit of command*—that truest of all tests of a chief, whether military or civil. Who rescued Braddock, when he was fighting *secundum artem*, and his men were dropping around him on every side? It was a Virginia militia major. He asserted in that crisis the place which properly belonged to him, and which he afterwards filled in the manner we all know."[1]

And, later in the same speech, Randolph committed himself to these sentiments, which his enemies did not forget when he afterwards accepted the Mission to Russia:

"Sir, what can the country do for me? Poor as I am, for I am much poorer than I have been, impoverished by unwise legislation, I still have nearly as much as I know how to use; more certainly than I have at all times made a good use of; and, as for power, what charm can it have for one like me? If power had been my object, I must have been less sagacious than my worst enemies have represented me to be (unless, indeed, those who would have kindly shut me up in bedlam) if I had not obtained it. I may appeal to all my friends to say whether 'there have not been times when I stood in such favor in the closet that there must have been something very extravagant and unreasonable in my wishes if they might not *all* have been gratified.' Was it office? What, Sir, to drudge in your laboratories in the departments, or be at the tail of the *corps diplomatique* in Europe? Alas! Sir, in my condition a cup of cold water would be more acceptable. What can the

[1] Bouldin, 290, 296.

country give me that I do not possess in the confidence of such constituents as no man ever had before? I can retire to my old patrimonial trees, where I may see the sun rise and set in peace. Sir, as I was returning the other evening from the capitol, I saw what has been a rare sight here this winter—the sun dipping his broad disk among the trees behind those Virginia hills; not allaying his glowing axle in the steep Atlantic stream; and I ask myself if, with this Book of Nature unrolled before me, I was not the most foolish of men to be struggling and scuffling here in this heated and impure atmosphere, where the play is not worth the candle. But then the truth rushed upon my mind that I was vainly perhaps, but honestly, striving to uphold the liberties of the people who sent me here; yes, Sir, for can those liberties coexist with corruption? At the very worst, the question recurs, which will the more effectually destroy them, collusion, bargain and corruption here, or a military despotism? When can that be established over us? Never, till the Congress has become odious and contemptible in the eyes of the People. I have learned from the highest of all authority that the first step towards putting on incorruption is the putting off corruption. That recollection nerves me in the present conflict; for I know that, if we are successful, I shall hold over the head of those, who shall succeed the present incumbent, a rod which they will not dare, even if they had the inclination, to disobey. They will tremble at the punishment of their predecessors. Sir, if we succeed, we shall restore the Constitution. We shall redress the injury done to the People. We shall regenerate the country. If the administration, which ensues shall be as bad as the character of the opposing candidate (General Jackson) is represented by his bitterest foes to be, still I had rather it were in the seat of power than the present dynasty, because it will have been fairly elected. The fountain of its authority will not be poisoned at the source. But, if we perish under the spasmodic struggles of those now in power to reinstate themselves on the throne, our fate will be a sacred one; and who would wish to survive it? There will be nothing left in the country worth any man's possession. If, after such an appeal has been made to the People, and a majority has been

brought into this and the other House of Congress, this administration shall be able to triumph, it will prove that there is a rottenness in our institutions which ought to render them unworthy of any man's regard. Sir, my *'church-yard cough'* gives me the solemn warning that, whatever part I shall take in the chase, I may fail of being in at the death. I should think myself the basest and the meanest of men—I care not what the opinion of the world might be—I should know myself to be a scoundrel, and should not care who else knew it, if I could permit any motive, connected with division of the spoil, to mingle in this matter with my poor but best exertions for the welfare of my country. If gentlemen suppose that I am giving pledges, they are mistaken. I give none; they are entitled to none, and I give none. I shall retire upon my resources; I will go back to the bosom of my constituents—to such constituents as man never had before, and never will have again; and I shall receive from them the only reward that I ever looked for, but the highest that man can receive—the universal expression of their approbation—of their thanks. I shall read it in their beaming faces; I shall feel it in their gratulating hands. The very children will climb around my knees to welcome me. And shall I give up them and this? And for what? For the heartless amusements and vapid pleasures and tarnished honors of this abode of splendid misery, of shabby splendor; for a clerkship in the War Office, or a foreign mission, to dance attendance abroad instead of at home, or even for a Department itself? Sir, thirty years make sad changes in man. When I first was honored with their confidence, I was a very young man, and my constituents stood almost in parental relation to me, and I received from them the indulgence of a beloved son. But the old patriarchs of that day have been gathered to their fathers; some adults remain, whom I look upon as my brethren; but the far greater part were children—little children—or have come into the world since my public life began. I know among them grandfathers, and men muster-free, who were boys at school when I first took my seat in Congress. Time, the mighty reformer and innovator, has silently and slowly, but surely, changed the relation between us; and I now stand to

them *in loco parentis*—in the place of a father—and receive from them a truly filial reverence and regard. Yes, Sir, they are my children, who resent with the quick love of children all my wrongs, real or supposed. Shall I not invoke the blessings of a common Father upon them? Shall I deem any sacrifice too great for them? To them I shall return, if we are defeated, for all the consolation that awaits me on this side of the grave. I feel that I hang to existence but by a single hair—that the sword of Damocles is suspended over me."[1]

During the second session of the 20th Congress, Randolph rarely invoked the attention of the House at all.

In 1828, Andrew Jackson was elected President, and, with the downfall of the Adams administration, which he had done so much to prostrate, Randolph sincerely felt for a time that he did not care ever to be a member of a deliberative assembly again.[2] Prompted by this feeling, he publicly announced that he would not be a candidate for reëlection to the House at the Congressional election in April, 1829; and, with the end of the 20th Congress, his long and renowned career as a member of the National Legislature came forever to an end.

[1] Bouldin, 304–307.

[2] Letter to Dr. John Brockenbrough, Apr. 28, 1829, Garland, v. 2, 323.

CHAPTER XI

Washington and the Roads between it and Roanoke

Before passing from the Congressional career of Randolph, however, let us pause for a moment to say a word about his mode of living and habits while he was a Congressman. In 1801, when Jefferson became President, the present site of Washington had been planned with remarkable skill and foresight by Major Pierre Charles L'Enfant, but was actually little more than a village in the heart of a wild waste of woods. The hill, on which the Capitol now stands, was then seamed with gullies and densely covered with trees, underbrush and tangled grapevines; and, on its crest, was being erected of white stone a capitol which was, as yet, but two wings without a body; though of such startling magnitude as to render it hopelessly incongruous with its primitive surroundings. About this uncompleted edifice, were seven or eight wooden boarding-houses, and as many shops, hardly better than shanties and occupied respectively by a tailor, a shoemaker, a printer, a washerwoman, a grocer, a stationer, a dealer in dry goods and an oyster vender.[1] Separating the hill on which the Capitol was situated from the Executive Mansion, which stood in a naked field, overlooking the Potomac, more than a mile to the west, was a swamp; and, connecting the Capitol and this Mansion, was a broad and straight clearing in the forest which ran across the swamp, and was traversed from

[1] Albert Gallatin to his wife, Jan. 15, 1801, *Life of Gallatin*, by Henry Adams, 252.

east to west by a rude roadway, studded with deep mud holes in winter. Flanking this roadway was a footway, solidified only to a limited extent by stone. In the bed of portions of the roadway, which were not in use, clumps of alder bushes had recently been growing,[1] and in its vicinity were pools of stagnant water which bred a host of mosquitoes. Along the rough highway, were a few small houses, some of brick and some of wood; and, near the Executive Mansion, were four or five buildings of red brick. Still further to the west, was Georgetown—a small but pretentious town, which contained many capacious and substantial residences of brick and stone; in some instances not without architectural beauty. East of the highway, that led from the Capitol to the Executive Mansion, were openings in the forest improved by a number of houses; some finished, and some unfinished.[2] Scattered about over parts of the site of Washington, were gravel pits and brick kilns which added to the rawness of its infancy. The town was very unhealthy too. In 1803, Rufus King thought that no one from the North or from the hill country of the South could pass the months of August and September there without incurring the risk of being stricken down with some form of malarial fever[3]; and then also provisions were scarce and had to be obtained mainly from Alexandria on the other side of the Potomac.[4] The only two places of public worship in the town were a small Catholic Church and a small Presbyterian one.[5] A monotone of dissatisfaction, which occasionally swells into disgust, runs through the comments on Washington of almost every person who had to reside there, at the beginning of the 19th century. Be-

[1] *Hist. of the Nat. Capital*, by W. B. Bryan, v. 1, 357.
[2] Gallatin to his wife, *supra*.
[3] Letter to C. Gore, Aug. 20, 1803, *Life of King*, by King, v. 4, 294.
[4] Gallatin to his wife, Jan. 15, 1801, Adams, 253.
[5] *Hist. of the Nat'l Capital*, by Bryan, v. 1, 232.

cause of the dearth of living facilities, public men at this time rarely brought their wives with them to the place. Most of the houses in it, Oliver Wolcott wrote to Mrs. Wolcott, were "small, miserable huts."[1] As a living place, Albert Gallatin declared in a letter to Mrs. Gallatin, that it was "hateful."[2] In 1805, Senator Plumer, of New Hampshire, described it as a "little village in the midst of the woods."[3]

"My God! What have I done to reside in such a city?", was the passionate exclamation of a French diplomat who missed in Washington everything that had rendered life agreeable to him in France.[4] Indeed, 15 or 18 years after the beginning of the 19th century, the thoroughfares in and about Washington were very little better than they were at the time of Jefferson's inauguration. Pennsylvania Avenue, which lay "straight as a gun-barrel" between the Capitol and the White House, was either a bed of "tenacious mud"[5] or of dust so deep and fine that when caught up by the wind it rendered nearby objects invisible. "The *chuck*-holes were not bad," said Harrison Gray Otis, in describing his exit from Washington in 1815, "that is to say, they were none of them much deeper than the hubs of the hinder wheels."[6] Speaking of the main road from Washington to Baltimore, which is now a splendidly paved thoroughfare, over which thousands of motor cars pass in the course of a week, Otis says in the same letter:

"The Bladensburg *Run, before we came to the bridge*, was happily in no one place *above* the horses' bellies. As we passed through, the driver pointed out to us the spot right under our wheels where the stage horses last year were drowned; but

[1] July 4, 1800, *Hist. of Washington & Adams' Adms.*, by Gibbs, v. 2, 377.
[2] Aug. 17, 1802, *Gallatin*, by Adams, 304.
[3] *Life of Wm. Plumer*, by Plumer, 244.
[4] *Social Life in the Early Republic*, by Anne H. Wharton, 60.
[5] *Life of Thos. Jefferson*, by Jas. Parton, 622.
[6] Letter to his wife, Feb. 28, 1815, *Life of Otis*, by Morisson, v. 2, 170.

then he consoled us by showing the tree on which all the passengers but *one* were saved. Whether that one was gouty or not I did not inquire."

Later, in the same letter, Otis tells us that he arrived safely at his first stage at Ross', after passing over the intervening distance at a rate rather exceeding 2½ miles per hour. In his *Memoirs*, John Quincy Adams says, under date of April 4, 1818, that the streets, by which his carriage came to a house, where he had been taking dinner, were in such a condition that the vehicle was overset and the harness broken; and that on his way home he was twice on the point of oversetting; and, at the Treasury Office corner, he was obliged to descend from the vehicle into the mud. "It was a mercy," he adds, "that we all got home with whole bones."[1]

In 1801, there were only some thirty-two hundred human beings within the limits of Washington, and of these at least six hundred were negro slaves.[2] Among the persons, who made up the population of the town, were many poor and vagrant individuals who, "so far as I can judge," Oliver Wolcott wrote to his wife, "live like fishes by eating each other."[3] Such a town, of course, could not hope to escape the spitefulness of Thomas Moore when he visited it in 1804:

"This embryo capital, where Fancy sees
Squares in morasses, obelisks, in trees;
Which second-sighted seers even now adorn,
With shrines unbuilt, and heroes yet unborn,
Though nought but woods and Jefferson they see
Where streets should run and sages *ought* to be."

One result of the transfer of the national capital from Philadelphia to an up-start capital like this was, of course,

[1] V. 4, 74. [2] *Hist of the U. S.*, by Edw. Channing, v. 4, 245.
[3] July 4, 1800, *Hist. of the Washington & Adams Adms.*, by Gibbs, v. 2, 377.

a distressing plethora of lodgers, so far as lodging accommodations were concerned. The majority of the members of Congress lodged in the boarding-houses near the Capitol, and so over-crowded were they that two and sometimes more individuals were compelled to share the same bedroom. At Conrad and McMunn's boarding-house, where Gallatin lodged when he was in the House, and Jefferson until his inauguration, the charge was $15.00 a week, which included attendance, wood, candles and liquors.[1] Board at the Indian Queen cost $1.50 a day, "brandy and whiskey being free."[2] The custom was for all the boarders in one of these boarding-houses to take their meals at one long table, like so many monks in a refectory. At Conrad & McMunn's, some 24 to 30 men were in the habit of sitting down to a meal at the same time; and Jefferson is said to have had the lowest and coldest place at the table; nor was a better seat offered him, it is likewise said, on the day when he took the oath of office as Chief Magistrate of the Republic.[3] And more trying even than the lot of one of the boarders at one of these boarding-houses was that of the individual who, for special reasons of one kind or another, was compelled to rent a house and to maintain an independent establishment.[4]

Such was Washington during the period when Randolph was the Democratic leader in the House. It was slow to change. As late as Dec. 26, 1827, he wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough: "The Pennsylvania Avenue is a long lake of mud."[5] On one occasion, he termed it, "The great Serbonian bog."[6] To the Abbé Correa, the Portu-

[1] Gallatin to his wife, Jan. 15, 1801, *Gallatin*, by Adams, 253.
[2] *Social Life in the Early Republic*, by Wharton, 72.
[3] Hunt's *First 40 Yrs. of Washington Society*, 12.
[4] Merry to Hammond, Dec. 7, 1803, Adams' *Hist. of U. S.*, v. 2, 362.
[5] Garland, v. 2, 297.
[6] 1895 *Report of Amer. Hist. Ass'n.*, 294.

gese Minister, Washington was "the abomination of desolation."[1]

In mentioning Washington, Randolph had a vocabulary of his own. At times, he dubbed it "Babeltown"; at other times, "Babylon." Writing to Nicholson from Roanoke on Aug. 4, 1811, he said:

"I see by this day's paper that I have but three months to stay in my hermitage; but, despairing (as I almost do) of the Republic, I shall 'cast many a longing lingering look behind' when I leave it for that focus of intrigue and venality, the *City* of Washington: ***urbem venalem ac mature perituram si emptorem invenerit;*** but, in this our day, there is no want of buyers."[2]

In another letter, written to Nicholson from Georgetown, in the course of the succeeding year, Randolph spoke of the "dreary and heartless life" that he led in Washington, and added:

"I do assure you that Lord Glenthorne himself never suffered more cruelly under the horrors of ***ennui*** than your old friend and sometime fellow-laborer in the political vineyard. By this time, I apprehend the contagion must be extending itself to you, for there is an infection even in my letters, not less subtle than that of the plague, which not even the precaution of passing them thro' vinegar can correct."[3]

Randolph had his own language, too, when mentioning the House of Representatives. He habitually called it "Babel"; once, certainly, "Bedlam," and once, "the Temple of Confusion." Another time he spoke of it as a "human desert," and still another time as a "sink of corruption and iniquity"; several times he pronounced it

[1] J. R. to Francis Scott Key, Roanoke, Oct. 23, 1815, McHenry Howard MSS.

[2] Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

[3] Jan. 22., 1812, *Ibid.*

a "bear garden." (*a*) But phrases of this kind must not be taken too seriously. Between his sensitive body and his vivid mind, Randolph found it hard to keep his voice from rising above the lower register of human speech.

During the first session of the 6th Congress (1799–1800), he boarded at Mirache's on North Fourth Street, in Philadelphia, with John Langdon, of New Hampshire, then a member of the Senate; Macon, Nicholson, and other members of Congress. "Willis Alston," he says in his Diary, "was one of the mess." "A paltry member of it," he sniffs scornfully. In his letters, allusions to "Mirache's Club" appear quite frequently; and, in one, written from Bizarre to Nicholson, a few weeks before Congress held its first session at Washington in 1800, he asks: "Shall I send a qur cask [of Madeira imported by a Virginian house] round *pro bono?* Will it not be preferable to being poisoned *à la* Mirache's?"[1]

Subsequently, when in Congress, he lodged at various places in Washington and Georgetown. Among his different fellow-lodgers at one or the other of these places, were Nicholson, Christie, Macon, Samuel Smith, Wilson Cary Nicholas, Aaron Burr, Joseph Bryan, Wade Hampton, Cæsar A. Rodney, the two Peales (the artists), Dr. Thomas, Tudor Tucker, Crowninshield, John Taylor of Caroline, Gen. Sumter, James M. Garnett, Beau Dawson, Dr. Bibb, and Richard Stanford.[2]

With regard to one of his later lodging places, he wrote to Tazewell: "I left Dawson's because of his misconduct. The filth and discomfort were intolerable, the society mixed, and ear-wigs in it."[3] He was so fastidious and touchy that he hardly won as a boarder, we imagine, the reputation of a benevolent autocrat of the breakfast table. He had a quick temper which did not brook much delay or inconvenience, as bear witness this story told in a letter

[1] Sep. 26, 1800, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.
[2] J. R.'s Diary. [3] Mar. 13, 1826, Littleton W. Tazewell, Jr., MSS.

from Robert Baylor to R. M. T. Hunter, afterwards the distinguished Senator from Virginia:

"Mr. John Randolph has given us the pleasure of his company twice lately in going to and returning from Richmond to Washington, on both of which occasions he amused us highly with his eccentricities of manner, conduct and conversation. Had such capers been played up by anyone else except himself or some kindred genius, they would assuredly have been viewed as the whims of a moon-struck madcap. One of his freaks was to continue his journey to Richmond in a few minutes after arriving here (Fredericksburg) from the steamboat landing between 11 and 12 o'clock at night, because the fat landlord (as he called Rawlins) had retired to bed and was not ready, cap in hand, to receive his Lordship; and that, too, after declaring that he had not slept five minutes for 72 hours. His companions were his servant Johnny, of whom he took occasion to make such honorable mention—in the Senate in one of his late long-winded harangues, and a pointer puppy which he carried in his lap."[1]

At all times when at Washington, Randolph lived in a liberal way. In July, 1800, when he was looking ahead to the removal of the national capital from Philadelphia to Washington, he wrote to Nicholson:

"Let me ask the favor of your good offices towards procuring me a comfortable asylum in that horrible and dreary wilderness. If you take a house (as you proposed), and it will not interrupt your arrangement, I shall be glad to get a part of it. If this can be done, I will furnish a pair of good horses and a couple of excellent servants towards the establishment. At all events, try your influence towards getting me good accommodations for myself, servant and two horses with a shelter for my carriage. I would much prefer a situation in the City, and the nearer the capitol the more acceptable. We shall be obliged to ride to the House every day, and, if I am so fortunate as to

[1] *Am. Hist. Ass'n. Report*, 1916, v. 2, 27.

get under the same roof with you, my gigg will very commodiously transport us both."[1]

But a few weeks later he decided to limit his retinue to a single servant and a pair of horses.[2] At McLaughlin's, Georgetown, in 1802, he secured two rooms and a private table for himself, board for his servants, and livery for his three horses at $28 a week. "I have never lived so well or so cheap since," he smugly observes in his Diary.

Transit between the national capital and Georgetown, when Randolph boarded at Georgetown, had its perils.

"I write in great pain," he wrote to Nicholson on one occasion. "Being very unwell last night, and unable to stay longer in the House of Representatives, I left it between 8 and 9 o'clock. There was no hack to be had, and I accepted the offer of a horse from one of the members. The tackle was very crazy, and, the only girth there was giving away, the saddle and rider both came down together on the hard turnpike road. Although in the heart of the capital of the United States, I was out of hearing of any person or habitation. After some time, a coach passed which I entreated in vain to take me home. At last, a gentleman changed horses with me, and I reached this place (Georgetown) in great torture. About 12, I was seized with a burning fever which has left me utterly exhausted after a profuse perspiration. My left hip and knee and right foot are much hurt."[3]

Not so much, however, that he could not recollect in the same letter the sorrowful plight to which Don Quixote was reduced when he attempted to alight from a horse and to salute the Duchess On another occasion, Randolph might well have been involved in a still more dangerous situation.

[1] July 1, 1800, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.
[2] Aug. 12, 1800, J. R. to Nicholson, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.
[3] May 3, 1807, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

"One night," he told Jacob Harvey, "after a merry supper with some friends, I started to take my lonely walk home, and had not proceeded far, before I observed that I was followed. However, I, at first, supposed that some other gentleman might be going the same way to his lodgings, and I proceeded; but, finding that the person, whoever he was, kept exactly at the same distance, I thought I would test the question by coming to a standstill. I did so—so did *he*. I walked on at a more rapid pace—so did *he*. I then walked slowly—*he* followed my example. Well, thinks I, I will be on my guard, and have blow for blow anyway, should he prove a highwayman. Unfortunately, I had neither pistol nor dirk, and it *might* be that *he* had both; but I had now no alternative. On I walked at a quick pace, hoping to meet some one, but not a creature appeared to be abroad but ourselves. I at length began to think it strange that my pursuer did not attack me, if such was his intention; when, just as I had reached the top of the deep descent to the river, and old bridge, I heard his steps quicken, and it instantly flashed across my mind that the rascal was waiting until I should gain the edge of the bank, and that *then* he would endeavor to push me into the rapid stream beneath! My resolution was taken in a moment. I slackened my pace until he had almost touched me, just as we had commenced the descent, and, drawing myself up on one side of the road, called out in a *fierce tone*, '*Now, Sir, it is your turn to go first!*' The fellow appeared to be thunder-struck; he gazed on me for a second, uttered an oath in an undertone, dashed across the bridge, and I saw no more of him! I told the story next day, and my friends were of opinion that I had a narrow escape, and, although I suspected a certain person, yet I never could gain sufficient proof to accuse anyone openly. But it was a lesson to me, Sir, and I did not take *that* walk again alone or unarmed during the remainder of the session!"[1]

The next time that his bones were imperilled, it was not by a highwayman, but by one of his own thoroughbreds.

"Since it began to rain about an hour ago," he wrote to Dr. Dudley, "I have felt as restless as a leech in a weather glass,

[1] *The New Mirror*, v. 1, 389.

and so I sit down to write to you. On Saturday, I had a narrow escape from a most painful death. Wildfire dashed off with me on the avenue, alarmed at a tattered wagon-cover, shivering in the wind, and would have dashed us both to pieces against an Italian poplar; but, when she was running full butt against it, and not a length off, by a violent exertion of the left heel and right hand I bore her off. There was not the thickness of the half quire of paper on which I am writing between my body and the tree. Had I worn a great coat or cloth boots, I must have touched—perhaps been dragged off by them; and, had I been without spurs, I must have lost my life; for the center of her forehead and that of the body of the tree, nearly or quite two feet in diameter, were approaching to contact. You know my great *liking* for this exotic which our tasteless people have stuck everywhere about them. I shall hereafter dislike it more than ever. In the course of my life, I have encountered some risks, but nothing like this. My heart was in my mouth for a moment, and I felt the strongest convictions of my utter demerit, in the sight of God, and my heart gushed out in thankfulness for his signal and providential preservation. What, thought I, would have been my condition had I then died? 'As the tree falls, so it must lie,' and I had been but a short time before saying to a man who tried to cheat me some very hard and bitter things. It was a poor auctioneer who had books on private sale. He attempted to impose upon me in respect to some classical books, of which he was entirely ignorant, and I exposed his ignorance to the people in the shop, many of whom were members of Congress and no better informed than him. The danger that I escaped was no injury to the speech, which I made out of breath, on finding, when I reached the House, that there was a call for the previous question; so true is it that of all motives religious feeling is the most powerful."[1]

The gush of penitence in this letter reminds us of the sinner who was killed by a fall from his horse, but of whom it could yet be said, in the ever-during mercy of God,

[1] Feb. 4, 1822, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 248.

"Between the stirrup and the ground,
He mercy sought, he mercy found."

Whenever Randolph came to Washington from Virginia, he was usually attended by one or more of his "bird dogs," as they are termed in Virginia, and, in the earlier stages of his career, he not infrequently shot quail and woodcock near Washington. In one of his letters to Nicholson, he speaks of a day of such shooting that he had had with James M. Garnett[1]; and in another of one that he expected to have with Lloyd of Maryland and Mr. Lowndes.[2] Garnett was usually his companion in the field, and their shooting ground was in the District, a little to the north of the Capitol, whence they generally returned with their bags well filled.[3] But, on one occasion, at any rate, he did not return with his bag full, unless he was determined to bring it back full without regard to the quality of its contents; for, in a letter to Theodore Dudley, he says: "I went out late, having waited for Mr. Ridgely; and, although Dido behaved to admiration, I killed nothing except two unqualified sportsmen—a large owl and a poaching cat."[4] When Randolph came to the House, one or two pointers, as a rule, accompanied him, and, as soon as he opened the door, that led into the House, they would rush in and run about nosing the members; exercising privileges, Sawyer complained, from which even respectable strangers were excluded.[5]

From Sawyer, too, we derive no little information about Randolph's habits and manners as a Congressman. He used, Sawyer says, to enter the House booted and spurred, with a whip in his hand, a few moments after it had come to order, and appeared to be desirous of attracting the attention of his fellow-members by the loud salutations, with which he greeted his intimates, to the fact of his

[1] Jan. 27, 1807, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.
[2] Jan. 31, 1807, *Id.*
[3] Sawyer, 46.
[4] *Letters to a Y. R.*, 129.
[5] Sawyer, 46.

presence. In the winter, he came with his body enveloped in a long lion-skin surtout and his face buried in a fur cap. Sometimes he would stop short in the middle aisle of the House, and, in case he saw some one up, to whom he did not care to listen, he would turn abruptly on his heel and go out.[1] According to Sawyer, his great failing was affectation. He had, Sawyer declares, two kinds of address; one stiff and formal with a long running bow, a touch of the hat, and an artificial smile for mere acquaintances or former friends, towards whom he had grown cool, and a cordial, long-continued hand-shake for his few bosom friends. He had been seen to walk up to Macon in the most ostentatious manner, while the House was in session, and to shake his hand so long and forcibly as to throw him into confusion. And, on another occasion, while shaking Quincy's hand, when parting with him, on the eve of a Congressional adjournment, he held his handkerchief to his face, and turned his head aside, as if in the act of shedding tears. Once his hand was not taken when offered. Passing out of the House with Garnett, he met his former enemy, Matthew Lyon, then a member of Congress from Kentucky, and tendered it. Lyon drew back, observing that he could not find it in his heart to shake hands with a man who had called him a "damned old rascal." Randolph then appealed to Garnett to state whether he had ever done so, and Garnett replied that he had; whereupon Randolph merely exclaimed, "It can't be helped!" and walked on.[2] By Sawyer we are also told that Randolph was very supercilious and magisterial in his treatment of young men, who had delivered their maiden speeches in behalf of administrations to which he was opposed.[3] Sawyer states that he would spring on their backs and ply whip and spur, and, the more they reared and pitched and plunged and capered, the more he clung to them, and lashed them until he had reduced them to the condition of

[1] Sawyer, 46. [2] *Id.*, 47. [3] *Id.*, 47.

well-broken political hacks. Some high-mettled and blooded colts, however, Sawyer thought, proved unmanageable and threw him; among them, McDuffie, of South Carolina.[1]

Sawyer, in this instance, was referring to a collision in the House which led to an interchange of hostile letters between McDuffie and Randolph. It is hardly worth while to go back to the origin of this correspondence. The facts immediately surrounding it were these: On Feb. 28, 1822, Randolph sent a note to McDuffie, presenting his compliments to him, and begging the favor of knowing whether McDuffie intended to offer personal insult to him in the debate on the preceding Saturday. In reply, McDuffie presented his compliments to Randolph, and said that his remarks were such as he should always feel bound to make in relation to Randolph or any other gentleman who should take as unwarrantable liberties as those which gave rise to his remarks, and that, if his remarks were insulting to Randolph, they were such as the occasion demanded. Randolph rejoined by saying that, since McDuffie had invested him with the character of the aggressor, he was ready to respond, and that his friend, Col. Thomas H. Benton, would receive the only communication that could now pass between them. This letter Benton delivered to McDuffie in the House, and, an hour or so afterwards, McDuffie came to the Senate chamber where Benton was, and offered the latter a sealed note, addressed to Randolph; but Benton declined to receive it, saying that he should take to Randolph only an answer of the precise character called for by Randolph's letter, and that he could take none without reading it to see whether it came up to that character. McDuffie then broke the seal of his note and handed it to Benton to read; which he did. He found it not of the character required by Randolph's letter, nor of a character anything like it, and he

[1] Sawyer, 47.

said so to McDuffie and handed it back to him. McDuffie took it and gave Benton no other, though he remained in the Senate chamber until the adjournment of the Senate. When Benton next met Randolph, it was at the dinner table at Dawson's between 5 and 6 in the evening of the same day. Company being present, he said to Randolph in French as they passed to their chairs: "*C'est fini et bien fini.*"[1] Benton states that, before Randolph sent his first note to McDuffie, he tried to convince him that the circumstances did not require of him that kind of notice, but that he persisted in his purpose.

A particularly interesting description of the daily advent of Randolph in the House after his morning ride is given to us by W. H. Sparks in his *Memories of Fifty Years:*

"His habit was to wear an overcoat, extending to the floor, with an upright, standing collar, which concealed his entire person except his head, which seemed to be set by the ears upon the collar of his coat. In early morning, it was his habit to ride on horseback. This ride was frequently extended to the hour of the meeting of Congress. When this was the case, he always rode to the Capitol, surrendered his horse to his groom—the ever faithful Juba—who always accompanied him in these rides, and, with his ornamental riding whip in his hand, a small-cloth or leathern cap perched upon the top of his head (which peeped out wan and meagre from between the openings of his coat collar), booted and gloved, he would walk to his seat in the House, then in session, lay down upon his desk his cap and whip, and then slowly remove his gloves. If the matter before the House interested him, and he desired to be heard, he would fix his large, round, lustrous black eyes upon the Speaker, and, in a voice, shrill and piercing as the cry of a peacock, exclaim, 'Mr. Speaker!'; then, for a moment or two, remain looking down upon his desk, as if to collect his thoughts; then, lifting his eyes to the Speaker, would commence in a conversational tone an address that not unfre-

[1] Coalter's Executor et al., *vs.* Randolph's executor, et al., Clerk's office, Cir. C., Petersburg, Va.

quently extended through five hours; when he would yield to a motion for adjournment with the understanding that he was to finish his speech the following day."[1]

Randolph was a member of the House for so many years that he finally became as much at home there as if he were lounging with a group of his familiar friends at a social club. Sawyer says that, during one of its night sittings, Randolph, while making a motion to adjourn, observed that one of his colleagues was resting his forehead, which was the worse for drink, on his desk, and that other members of the House were overcome with sleepiness, after a long debate; and that Randolph exclaimed: "What is the use of sitting here! The House is far from being wide awake to the important question before it." He then advanced to one of the slumberers, remarking, "Here is one asleep," and shook him, telling him, as he did so, that he had better be at home in bed; then approached the remaining slumberers in succession, and aroused them too in the same manner to the no small amusement of the other members of the House.[2] (*a*)

Jabez D. Hammond also represents Randolph as seeming to feel as self-possessed, and as much at home in the House, as the schoolmaster in his school or the merchant in his counting-room; and certainly nothing that we have ever read of him gives us such a pointed impression of both his intimacy with the House and his smoothly flowing current of speech as the particular instance which Hammond recalls in support of his assertion. One day, while speaking, Randolph was standing in the alley of the House, leaning on the back of a common chair, when the chair slid, and he fell supine upon his back; but he promptly regained his feet without ever having suspended a word or even a syllable of his argument at any time during the mishap. "Had a blind man," remarks Hammond, "been listening

[1] 226. [2] Sawyer, 63.

to his speech, he could not have perceived that anything unusual had occurred."[1]

But Randolph was not more familiar with the House than he was with the highways which led from Bizarre or Roanoke to Washington. In his day, the roads in every portion of the United States were bad, but the Virginia roads were reputed to be the worst of all.[2] In his vain effort to find something better than the scene of his last venture, Randolph seems to have tried at one time or another all the routes by which Washington could be reached from Bizarre or Roanoke; and the only thing, by which their hardships, when the roads were in a sorry plight from the weather, were mitigated, was the hospitality that the houses of his friends along the way proffered so willingly.

On Feb. 24, 1810, we find him setting out for Congress. The night of that day, he spent at the home of George Skipwith, one of the leading landowners of Cumberland County; the next night, he spent at the home of Dr. Bathurst Randolph, in Amelia, and, the next, at the home of Harry Heth; after dining with Captain Murray on the way. The next day, Heth accompanied him to the home of Dr. Brockenbrough in Richmond, where he remained until March 4th, when he set out for Todd's Bridge with Ryland Randolph and Dr. Brockenbrough; dining on the way at Newcastle, in Hanover County. The next day, March 5th, he dined at the home of his friend, James M. Garnett, in Essex County; Dr. Brockenbrough leaving him and going on to Tappahannock, the home of the Doctor's childhood. The next day, March 6th, Randolph dined at Mt. Pleasant, the home of old Mrs. Garnett. On March 7th, he proceeded to Hazelwood, the home of John Taylor of Caroline, in Caroline County, with James M. Garnett. On March 10th, he proceeded

[1] *Life, etc., of Julius Melbourn*, 93.

[2] *Travels in 1827–1828*, by Capt. Basil Hall, v. 3, 72.

by Port Royal, in Caroline County, and Hooes Ferry, on the Potomac, to the home of John Campbell in Maryland, and, on March 11th, by way of Port Tobacco and Piscataway, in Maryland, to Georgetown. A very leisurely, but certainly a very agreeable, mode of working, by easy stages, back to "Babeltown"! with no lack, we may be sure of gĕnerous hospitality or of race-track or State-Rights talk.[1] Indeed, so agreeable did Randolph find this itinerary that, when Congress adjourned in 1810, he almost doubled upon his tracks on his return to Bizarre.

The next time he set out for Congress, it was from Roanoke in Jan., 1811. The first night, Jan. 5th, he spent at the home of his friend, Thomas T. Bouldin, in Charlotte County, and, the next, at Moore's Ordinary. The next day, Jan. 7th, he breakfasted at Miller's (doubtless to escape breakfast at the ordinary), and slept at the home of Daniel Hardaway, in Amelia County. On Jan. 8th, he slept at the home of Mr. Watkins, in Chesterfield County; thence, after spending several days with his friends, Benjamin Watkins Leigh and William Leigh at Mr. Watkins', and a day or so in Richmond, he went on, by way of Hanover Court House, Hazelwood, Fredericksburg, Dumfries and Alexandria to Washington, where, on the very day of his arrival, Jan. 23, he caned Alston, and, in the short space of four days afterwards, was challenged by Eppes.[2] When he returned from this session of Congress, it was *via* Occoquan; Fredericksburg, which he reached the second day out from Washington; Bowling Green, where he dined and spent the night with a party of gentlemen; the White Chimneys, where he took a seat in the stage from Fredericksburg, which had caught up with him at that point, when he found that his friend William Morton was in it; Richmond, where he washed his hands of Monroe at a final interview with him; Harry Heth's;

[1] J. R.'s Diary. [2] *Id.*

Dr. Randolph's, which he reached, with the aid of Heth's horse and chair, and where he "took a snack"; Sam Farrar's, where he spent the night; and Peyton Randolph's; arriving at Roanoke on March 20, 1811.[1]

On one occasion, we find Randolph reaching Richmond from his home by way of the Manakin Town Ferry,[2] a point on the James River some 17 miles west of Richmond.

Another route, from Washington to Roanoke, which he sometimes took, was by way of Cartersville, on the James River, forty-seven miles west of Richmond.

A third route, after the steamboat came into use, was by way of steamboat from Washington to Potomac Creek, thence 9 miles by stage to Fredericksburg, and thence by horse and carriage to Richmond and Roanoke.

Still another was by steamboat to City Point, on the James River, or Richmond, and thence by horse and carriage to Roanoke.[3]

His usual route from Washington to Roanoke, however, was across what he called "those nasty streams, Accotink, Pohick, Neabsco, Quantico, Chappawamsic and Acquia"[4] to Fredericksburg; thence by way of Bowling Green to Richmond and on. In passing to and fro between Southside Virginia and Washington, Randolph seems to have adopted, on one occasion or another, every means of carriage known to his day. Sometimes, he covered the entire distance on horseback; and, on one occasion, he records in his Diary the fact that he left Alexandria on July 10, 1812, a very hot day, on Brunette, and arrived at Fredericksburg the same day, a distance of some 50 miles, much exhausted.[5] On July 12th, after spending a day with John and Hugh Mercer, in Fredericksburg, he pushed on to the Bowling Green, a distance of about 20 miles, and,

[1] J. R.'s Diary. [2] *Id.*

[3] J. R. to F. W. Gilmer, Feb. 25, 1825, Bryan MSS; Garland, v. 2, 287, 289.

[4] J. R. to Nathan Loughborough, Jan. 5, 1832. [5] J. R.'s Diary.

turning over Brunette to Jupiter, who had either accompanied him to that point or met him there, he took the stage and went on to Richmond.[1] On other occasions, he made the journey in his gig with his faithful John or Juba as his attendant. On one occasion, at any rate, he even made it in his cumbrous coach drawn by four thoroughbreds with John and Juba in attendance.[2]

What stage travel was over the roads between Richmond and Washington, we well know from descriptions which have come down to us from travellers of Randolph's time. In 1790, it took Thomas Jefferson, when on his way to the seat of the National Government at New York, two days to journey from Richmond to Alexandria. Here he was met by his carriage and horses, but an 18-inch snow fell that night, and he decided to go on from Alexandria by stage, and to have his horses led, and to ship his carriage by water to New York. From Alexandria, his progress through the snow and mud did not exceed 2 or 3 miles an hour by day or a mile an hour by night. Occasionally, from sheer tedium, he would alight from the stage, and ride along for some distance on his led saddle-horse. The whole time consumed in his journey from Richmond to New York amounted to no less than a fortnight.[3]

In 1802, Jefferson pronounced the road from Fredericksburg to Washington, by way of Dumfries and Alexandria, "the worst in the world."[4]

In March, 1813, Nathaniel Macon wrote to Nicholson that the roads were then worse than usual, and that it took fifty hours to traverse the distance of 50 miles between Fredericksburg and Alexandria.[5]

In March, 1829, Randolph wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough that he had been 7 hours making the 20 miles from

[1] J. R.'s Diary. [2] *Recollections of Genl. Dabney H. Maury*, 2d Ed., 9.
[3] *Life of Thos. Jefferson*, by Henry S. Randall, v. 1, 559.
[4] *Id.*, v. 3, 5. [5] March 1, 1813, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

Mrs. Ward's, south of Washington, to Stafford Court House.[1]

It is to be hoped that the hardships to which George Ticknor was exposed on his way through Southern Maryland from Washington to Port Tobacco, Maryland, in 1815, were wholly exceptional:

"We left Washington, the 24th, just at sunrise," he said, "and drove five miles to a ferry, where our troops in their infatuation had burnt a bridge. It took an hour to cross the river through the ice, and then our way led through open fields, where only one wagon had preceded us. We had hardly driven a quarter of a mile, when we broke through some ice; one horse fell, and the carriage, as the phrase is, 'mired up to the hubs.' In half an hour, we were extricated, and went on carefully by the track, often walking to lighten the carriage; when the track suddenly turned into the woods, and left us without a guide. The snow was ten or fifteen inches deep, unbroken for a mile or two, when we again followed a cart a short distance. At last we reached the 'Half-way House,' a miserable hut of one room; and, as I went in, I saw a girl sitting by the fire, pale and feeble from illness; and, turning from her, lest she should think me too curious, saw a young man on a bed behind the door; whose countenance showed that he had not long to suffer. I was glad to leave this wretched hut. We went on at a moderate walk, foundered twice in the snow and mud, and at last broke the pole, when two miles from the nearest house. So Gray and I mounted one of the leaders, and rode on, fording three brooks, one of them pretty deep. It was after three when we reached an inn, and soon sat down to our breakfast! I had not eaten anything for twenty-four hours, and had worked hard, besides all the walking in the snow. When we had finished our meal, we took another carriage, being solemnly warned of the difficulty of crossing the Matasmin, which, like all the other streams hereabout, has no bridge. We reached the ford just before sundown, found it frozen, [and] broke the ice with poles; an hour and a half's hard driving and whipping got the horses into the middle of the

[1] March 7, *Missouri Hist. Soc.*, MSS.

stream, where they refused to go any farther. We got out of the carriage, and reached the bank on the ice. I left all my luggage, but a blanket, with the carriage in the middle of the stream. Through deep snow, we walked a mile and a half to the first house. Though called a tavern, it was a miserable hovel; and, when I went in, I found two slaves stretched by the fire on one side, and two pigs (*a*) on the other. As soon as the landlord had gone to the help of the driver, I began to look for accommodations for six passengers, two of whom were women. In the kitchen, I found plenty of snow, but no fire or cooking utensils or eatables. I asked the boys if they had any beds. 'Yes, one.' 'No more?' 'No.' 'Have you any hay or straw'? 'No.' 'Why, what does your master's horse live on'? 'O, he lives on the *borry*.' What was meant by 'the *borry*,' was not clear at first, but, finding it meant 'borrowing,' I told the boy to get in a good parcel of 'borry.' In an hour, the coach was dragged up, and I began to talk about supper. It was a long time before the woman of the house would answer distinctly; but, after much urging and much searching, she gave us each a small tumbler of milk, and a short allowance of Indian cake. At ten o'clock, the table was moved away, the pigs and negroes kicked out of the room, and two things misnamed beds were thrown down on some 'borry,' and I went supperless to bed. The wind came in through large cracks in four doors and two windows; yet I slept well, with three white companions and two negroes. I waked in the morning more hungry than when I went to sleep; but, at 'sun up,' as they say here, set off without a mouthful of food. We went two miles, half on foot, and then stuck fast in the mud, and, after wasting our little strength in vain, Gray and I again mounted one of the horses, took a wrong track, went a mile before we discovered our mistake, at 12 reached the tavern only four miles from where we slept, sent back a yoke of oxen to pull out the coach, sent a man forward seven miles for horses and help, and then ordered breakfast. The people were very poor, and we found sickness and suffering more moving than we had seen it yesterday. The breakfast was so poor that, hungry and fainting as we were, we could hardly eat enough to support us; but we could not complain, with such

misery about us. Two miles farther, we came to another stream; we had to break the ice, and, after an hour's delay, make our way to the opposite bank as we could. There, from a hill, we saw two saddle horses and a tandem chaise coming to our relief. Gray and I took the horses; thinking a horse for each a luxury indeed. We soon reached this place, having in fifty-six hours had but one proper meal! We are in very good lodgings, and are promised better roads to Richmond."[1]

Nor are we at a loss to know from other travellers what travelling meant in Randolph's time on the route from Washington to Richmond, by way of Dumfries, Fredericksburg, and Bowling Green, and on the route between the same termini by way of Potomac Creek, Fredericksburg and Bowling Green.

In 1806, John Melish, a British traveller, on his way to the South, left Alexandria in the stage a little before 5 A. M., after having kept his seat in it since 4.30 A. M., and "travelled by a pretty rough road 17 miles to Occoquhan Creek," where the stage stopped for breakfast[2]; thence, through a hilly, and but partially cultivated, country to Dumfries, a small town containing about 300 inhabitants, a court house, a jail, etc., and thence, through a hilly, but better improved, country, to Fredericksburg, where he spent the night. At this time, Alexandria had a population of 4096 free inhabitants and 875 slaves; Fredericksburg a population of about 1600 inhabitants. The next morning, Melish left Fredericksburg in the stage about 1 o'clock A. M., and passed through an uneven, but pretty well-cultivated, country, to Bowling Green, and thence he was conveyed over the Mattapony and Pamunkey Rivers to Hanover Court House; and from that point to Richmond, after traversing on the other side of Falling Creek a country which he describes as "handsomely settled."[3] (*a*)

[1] Port Tobacco, Md., Jan. 26, 1815, *Life, Letters & Journals of Geo. Ticknor*, v. 1, 31.

[2] *Travels Through the U. S. in 1806*, &c., 157. [3] *Id.*, 158, 159.

The roads were not so bad as to subdue the spirits of his company in the stage, which was, he says, very jolly and good-natured, singing songs and telling stories as they went.[1]

The view that Thomas Moore took of stage travel along the Atlantic Coast was not so amiable; for, when he visited America, aversion to Republicanism happened to be his last affectation. Writing to his mother, he says:

"I am now, dearest mother, more than 300 miles from Norfolk. I have passed the Potomac, the Rappahannock, the Occoquan, and *Potapsio* and many other rivers with names as barbarous as the inhabitants. Every step I take not only *reconciles* but *endears* to me not only the excellencies but even the errors of old England. Such a road as I have come! and in such a conveyance! The mail takes 12 passengers, which generally consist of squalling children, stinking negroes, and Republicans smoking cigars. How often it has occurred to me that nothing can be more emblematic of the *Government* of this country than its *stages* filled with a motley mixture, 'hail fellow well met,' driving through mud and filth, which *bespatters* them as they *raise* it, and risking an *upset* at every step."[2]

But nothing could give us a completer picture of the Dumfries-Fredericksburg-Bowling Green route than does a later narrative by Adam Hodgson, a British traveller, written on Feb. 19, 1820.

"I left Washington on the 24th ult.," he says, "proceeding only to Alexandria, six miles distant, where I slept, and where I had been not a little surprised to meet Joseph Lancaster a few days before. I set off the next morning at 3 o'clock, in what is called the mail-stage, the only public conveyance to the Southward, and a wretched contrast to the excellent

[1] *Travels Through the U. S. in 1806*, &c., 158.

[2] June 13, 1804, *Memoirs, &c., of Thos. Moore*, Ed. by Lord John Russell, v. 1, 76.

coaches in the North. It is a covered wagon, open at the front with four horses, and, although it was intensely cold, I was obliged to take my seat by the driver in order to secure a view of the country during the remainder of the day. The road led across woody labyrinths, through which the driver seemed to wind by instinct; and we often jolted into brooks which were scarcely fordable. Leaving Mt. Vernon, which I had previously visited, to our left, we reached Occoquan, 23 miles, to breakfast. Occoquan is romantically situated on a river of the same name which winds below masses of rock, which my companion compared with those of the hot-wells at Clifton, but they did not appear to me to be so high. We then proceeded by Neapsco, Dumfries, the Wappomansie River, Acquia, Stafford and Falmouth to Fredericksburg, a small town on the Rappahannock which we crossed by moonlight. Our journey this day was 50 miles in 16 hours. The next morning at 3 o'clock, we left Fredericksburg, and, passing the Bowling Green, Hanover Court House, and the Oaks, reached Richmond at 7 o'clock; 66 miles in 17 hours. At Hanover Court House, at least 150 horses were standing fastened to the trees; all the stables being full; as it was a court day. This gave me a good opportunity of examining the Virginia horses, which appear to deserve their reputation. After we left Alexandria, the country assumed an aspect very different from any which I had before seen. For miles together, the road runs through woods of pine; intermingled with oak and cedar; the track sometimes contracting within such narrow limits that the vehicle rubs against the trees; at others, expanding to the width of a London turnpike road; yet so beset with stumps of trees that it requires no common skill to effect a secure passage. On emerging at intervals from forests, which you have begun to fear may prove interminable, the eye wanders over an extensive country, thickly wooded and varied with hill and dale; and the monotony of the road is further relieved by precipitous descents into romantic creeks or small valleys, which afford a passage to the little rivers hastening to the Atlantic. Every 10 or 15 miles, you come either to a little village, composed of a few frame houses, with an extensive, substantial house, whose respectable appearance

rather than any sign demonstrates it to be a tavern (as the inns are called) or to a single house appropriated to that purpose and standing alone in the woods. At these taverns, you are accosted often with an easy civility, sometimes with a repulsive frigidity by a landlord who appears perfectly indifferent whether or not you take anything *for the good of the house.* If, however, you intimate an intention to take some refreshment, a most plentiful repast is in due time set before you, consisting of beefsteaks, fowls, turkeys, ham, partridges, eggs, and, if near the coast, fish and oysters, and a great variety of hot bread, both of wheat flour and Indian corn; the latter of which is prepared in many ways and is very good. (*a*) The landlord usually comes in to converse with you and to make one of the party, and, as one cannot have a private room, I do not find his company disagreeable. He is, in general, well informed, and well behaved, and the independence of manner, which has often been remarked upon, I rather like than otherwise, when it is not assumed or obtrusive, but appears to rise naturally from easy circumstances and a consciousness that, both with respect to situation and intelligence, he is at least on a level with the generality of his visitors. At first, I was a little surprised, on inquiring where the stage stopped to breakfast, to be told at Major Todd's;—to dine?—at Col. Brown's—but I am now becoming familiar with these phenomena of civil and political equality, and wish to communicate my first impressions before they fade away. Between the villages, if such they may be called, you see few habitations, and these are almost exclusively log houses, which are constructed as follows: trunks of trees about a foot or a foot and a half in diameter, generally with the bark on, are laid on one another, indented a little at each end to form a kind of fastening; their length determining the length and width, and their number the height, of the building. The interstices are usually filled with clay; though sometimes, especially in barns, they are allowed to remain open, in which case you can generally see daylight through both walls. Situated in a thick wood, with a little space cleared around them, where the stems of last years' Indian corn are still standing, among the recently decapitated stumps of trees, these dwellings exhibit as striking a contrast,

as can well be imagined, to an English cottage, with its little garden. Sometimes, however, as in England, you may see a neat, modest-looking cottage-girl standing at the door, whose placid cheerful countenance seems to smile with good-natured satire on the external decorations of rank and fashion; and even the black faces of the little slaves, the more frequent inhabitants of these primitive cabins, are often irradiated with a smile of playfulness and satisfaction."[1]

When Capt. Basil Hall journeyed from Washington to Richmond, he took the Potomac Creek route. From Washington to Potomac Creek, about 60 miles, he travelled by steamboat, and from Potomac Creek to Fredericksburg, 9 miles, by stage.[2] The roads, over which this stretch of distance extended, he says, were cut to pieces by carriage wheels and torrents of rain; and any other vehicle than a stout American stage, he declares, must have been shaken to atoms.[3] Between Fredericksburg and Richmond, the stage, in which the Captain was borne, made "four miles an hour pleasantly enough."[4] The whole travelling expense for each person and his party, including the cost of a substantial breakfast and dinner, between Washington and Fredericksburg was nearly three pence half penny a mile.[5]

C. D. Arfwedson, who journeyed from Washington southwards a little after Randolph's death, also took the Potomac Creek route. He was soon reminded, he says, of his entrance into the Southern States by the execrable condition of the public roads; and it was the roads known as "corduroy" roads (that is boggy roads with the trunks of trees laid closely together across them to make a solid roadway) which seemed to have especially attracted his attention. He says that, if the pieces of timber had been properly dressed and placed in position, they would have

[1] *Letters from N. America*, v. 1, 18, *et seq.*
[2] *Travels*, v. 3, 68, 70.
[3] *Id.*, 69. [4] *Id.*, 72. [5] *Id.*, 69, 70.

answered the purposes of a well-constructed bridge; but that, in some instances, they were laid down with their small boughs still attached to them, which, becoming entangled with the wheels of the stage, not infrequently displaced the pieces to which they belonged, and naturally raised the question as to which was the stronger—the wheel or the boughs; but not in the mind of the driver; for never did he check the speed of his horses for fear that the coach might go to pieces; and this notwithstanding the fact that the Southern portions of the United States were still so thinly peopled that one might travel for miles and miles through forests without discovering a human habitation where assistance could be procured in case of necessity. Accidents, too, often occurred, and, on such occasions, if a carriage or team could not be found in the neighborhood, the driver, impelled by the eagerness of his employer to escape the penalty inflicted upon him by the National Government, in case of his default in delivering mail within the time fixed by his contract, took the mail bags out of the stage, threw them upon a cart, and thus continued his journey; leaving the unfortunate passengers in the middle of the road, in a bog or in a forest many miles from any habitation.[1] The worst part of the direct route by Occoquan, Fredericksburg and Bowling Green to Richmond was the part north of Fredericksburg, where numerous tidal streams flowed into the Potomac and obstructed the progress of the traveller with mire, when it did not do so with water. After writing to Theodore Dudley on one occasion that the road from Bowling Green to Richmond had been reduced to a worse condition by wretchedly bad weather than he had ever before known it to be, Randolph inquired: "What must the effect have been on the roads further north, which I thought had already reached their *ultimatum?*"[2]

[1] *U. S. and Canada*, v. 1, 314.

[2] *Letters to a Y. R.*, Mar. 10, 1813, 140.

What the road from Fredericksburg to Cartersville was, when heavy, Randolph himself has told us in a letter to Nathan Loughborough:

"It is a disgrace to the County of Louisa, through which its whole course runs," he said. "I have endeavored to frighten them by threatening to take away the mail route. In some places, the road is a hollow one, not 10 feet, often not 8 wide, as many deep, shut in by the high banks and a fence on each side, and the clay so tenacious that it was as much as my gallant grey could do to tear his feet out of it. I thought he would have left his whole shoe behind."[1]

Many a casualty and disappointment by flood or field must have befallen Randolph over such roads as those which lay between Charlotte County and Washington. Of this we may be assured from some of the events which he has happened to preserve for us. (*a*)

This is what overtook him when he struck off across country from Fredericksburg to Cartersville on his way to Bizarre:

"When I reached Fredericksburg," he wrote to Nicholson, "I determined to dash across the country (120 miles) and send Johnny on in the mail stage by way of Richmond. The journey was beyond measure distressing, without a servant or even a change of linen, for I forgot to take with me what had been left out for that purpose by my own order. I was for two days and a half drenched with rain, forced to sleep in hovels and litter with beasts in the shape of men, under a burning fever all the while. Every hour or two, I feared that my little mare, who ate next to nothing, would serve me from inability, as some politicians had before done, from treachery. But, thanks to my good fortune, (observe *my* luck) she travelled with spirit to the last."[2]

Randolph, at least, had better luck on this occasion, when he reached Cartersville, than Dr. James Waddell

[1] Apr. 30, 1828, Loughborough MSS.
[2] March 9, 1805, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

Alexander had many years later. In one of his letters to Dr. Hall, the latter tells him that he travelled all one cold night in a stage alone, over such roads as he had never seen, and then all the next day, and, when he arrived at Cartersville, found that he could not cross the James River because of its swollen state. "I slept on the Goochland side, in the lock-keeper's house, 'three in a bed,' in an unfurnished house," he said.[1]

And here is a little scrap of dialogue which brings home to us, with all the peculiar animation that belongs to that form of composition, the perils of the amphibious region which lies along the Potomac on the Virginia side, south of Washington:

"11th, Tuesday. Breakfasted at eight A. M., and reached Battader by quarter past twelve. Fed my horses, and arrived at Fredericksburg half-past three. Road heavy. Mansfield lane almost impassable. Excellent fare at Gray's and the finest oysters I have seen for this ten year.

"12th, Wednesday. Hard frost. Left Fredericksburg at nine A.M. Reached Stafford C. H. at half-past eleven, Dumfries at five minutes past three, P.M., and Occoquan at half-past five. I made no stop, except to breathe the horses, from Dumfries to Neabsco, sixty-five minutes, three and a half miles. The five miles beyond Dumfries employed nearly two hours. Roads indescribable.

"13th, Thursday. Snow; part heavy rain. Waited until meridian when, foreseeing that, if the roads froze in their then state, they would be impassable; and that the waters between me and Alexandria would be out perhaps for several days, I set out in the height of the storm, and, through a torrent of mud, and water, and sloughs of all degrees of viscidity, I got to Alexandria before five, where a fine canvas-back (*a*) and divers other good things set my blood into circulation.

"14th, Friday. Bitter cold. Reached Washington half-past eleven. House does not sit today. Funeral. No southern mail. Waters out.

[1] *Charlotte C. H.*, Feb. 23, 1842, v. 1, 348.

"15th. Very cold. No southern mail. Waters out. Just beyond Pohick, I met a man driving a double chair.

"J. R.—'Pray, Sir, can I ford Accotink?'

"Traveller.—'If you drive brisk, perhaps you may.'

"J. R.—'Did you cross it, Sir?'

"T. T.—'Yes; but it is rising very fast.'

"As I pressed my little mare on, or rather as she pushed on after comrade and Johnny, I thought of Sir Arthur and Miss Wardour, of the old Gaberlunzie, as, in breathless anxiety, they turned the head-land, and found the water-mark under water. Pohick, a most dangerous ford at all times, from the nature of the bend of the stream, which is what is called a kettle-bottom, was behind me, and no retreat and no house, better than old Lear's hovel, except the church, where were no materials for a fire. When I reached Accotink, the sandbank in the middle of the stream was uncovered; but, for near a mile, I was up to the saddle-skirts. A great price, my good Sir, for the privilege of franking a letter, and the honor of being overlooked by the great men, new as well as old.

"Just at the bridge over Hunting Creek, beyond Alexandria, I met the mail cart and its solitary driver. The fog was Cimmerian.

"J. R.—'How far do you go tonight, friend?'

"D.—'To Stafford Court House, Sir. Can I ford the Accotink?'

"J. R.—'I think you may; but it will be impossible before midnight: I am really sorry for you.'

"D.—'God bless your Honor.'

"I am satisfied this poor fellow encounters every night dangers and sufferings in comparison with which those of our heroes are flea bites."[1]

From the same pen, we have this lively little story told to Randolph's friend, Nathan Loughborough, who loved a horse as much as he did.

[1] J. R. to Dr. Brockenbrough in 1821, Garland, v. 2, 152.

"I owe you a report of your noble old horse, Blossom. We reached the landing at Potomac Creek late. As I intended to go no further that night, I was dilatory in my movements until the aspects of the House determined me to go on to Fredericksburg. By this time, the stage had 20 minutes start of me. Between three and four miles from the landing, I overtook it, with the mail cart in its wake. These conscientious public servants soon met an ox-cart (fish cart); one of the yoke of oxen down. The cart and stage blocked the way; for, although going opposite ways, they lay alongside of each other, and, as Tom Piper says, 'They kept jawing alongside and fore and aft'; for they were acquaintances, it seems (the drivers), until the coachee and guard (as they would call him in England) resolved upon relieving the distressed driver; and so they fairly dragged the little steer aside, and set him on his legs. This operation cost the United States mail (then later than common) 20 minutes, and to me, exposed to the night air, every minute was an hour. I very soon, by a dexterous Nelson dash, broke the line, and cut off the leader (the mail cart) from the 74 (stage); the driver of the cart receiving a volley of curses from the stage-coachman for suffering me to pass; and, in the midst of his choler, I shook another reef or two out of old Blossom's top-sails, and walked to windward of him also. Now began racing and tearing on their part; on mine and Blossom's nothing but 'a whistle for a breeze.' In consequence of the numerous gates across the road and ignorance of it, we were twice very near being run down by the scoundrels, who then found out that the mail was late, and swore that they would pass me or kill their horses. At any rate, pass me they would. Johnny [his black servant] having a skittish horse to lead, and bad gates to open, (they had a man from the box to jump down and perform this service) was twice nearly run over by their leaders, but a friendly hill enabled Blossom to give them the go-by. They were dead beat; but, when I got to the wretched, ill-kept ferry, with the boat at Fredericksburg, a fish wagon had just pushed off from the shore. I made sure that the stage would drive up before the boat could return; but, so far from it, I had time to await the return boat; and (although delayed at the wretched inn at Fredericksburg for

my bed about three-quarters of an hour) was in the act of entering it when the stage drove up."[1]

When the reader remembers that Randolph was at this time in his 55th year, and is told that his kidneys were probably the only organ in his body that was not gravely diseased, he may well marvel at the indomitable spirit with which he maintained the competition that he describes in this letter. But then the reader will recollect what Randolph wrote to his sea-captain friend: "But to me a horse is what a ship is to you."

In the year 1802, he could write to Nicholson from Bizarre: "I am just off a most cruel ride of 40 miles in little more than 5 hours."[2] Several years later, he wrote to the same correspondent from Bizarre, shortly after his cross-country ride of 120 miles, in these words:

"My own constitution, which nothing seems able to break down, has surprisingly resisted the disease which has been so long consuming me. In spite of a ride of 60 miles on horseback on Monday, and subsequent exposure without sufficient defense to the late severe change of weather, and total want of sleep (to say nothing of my journey home), I daily gain strength. Nought you know is never in danger; and he who has nothing worth living for, and whose loss none, perhaps, would deplore, cannot die but by violence."[3]

After active physical strength failed Randolph in almost every other form, it still survived in his horsemanship. The day, on which he wrote his letter to his sea-captain friend, which was only some 5 years before he died, he had completed on horseback the whole distance between Washington and Cartersville; and had on that day covered 35 miles of this distance.[4] Bad as were the roads to Rich-

[1] April 30, 1828, Nathan Loughborough MSS.
[2] Oct. 31, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.
[3] March 17, 1805, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.
[4] *The New Mirror*, v. 2, 71.

mond on both sides of the Potomac River, Randolph seems to have preferred them to the water-lanes of the Potomac and the James.

The steamboat, which plied between Washington and Potomac Creek, was, we are told by John Randolph Bryan, "one of the old-fashioned craft with her cabin all under deck abaft the engine, without any state-rooms, [but with] open berths over each other, with a plain calico curtain."[1] Writing to Dr. Brockenbrough in 1827, Randolph says: "Tazewell talks of going home (Norfolk), and has asked me to go with him. If I could bear the beastly abominations of a steamboat, I would do it; for here I cannot stay."[2]

Randolph complained on one occasion that the only place where one could escape curiosity was at an inn. It is well that the inns between Washington and Roanoke should have had at least this redeeming feature, because some of them must have severely tried the delicate stomach and fastidious spirit of Randolph. "I would as lief die in my carriage, or on the road, at some wretched inn between here and Washington, as anywhere," he said in his celebrated speech delivered at Charlotte Court House shortly after Andrew Jackson had issued his Nullification Proclamation.[3] Powhatan Bouldin tells us that on one occasion, when Randolph was at breakfast, he said: "Servant, if this be coffee, give me tea; and, if it be tea, give me coffee."[4] After all, however, the long journey between Roanoke and Washington gave Randolph but little concern. In one of his letters to Dr. Hall, the Rev. James Waddell Alexander, after expressing the opinion that Randolph was a great genius, an orator absolutely unrivalled in America, a ripe scholar, and a consistent

[1] *The Jeffersonian*, Aug. 25, 1886, Bryan MSS.
[2] Dec. 15, 1827, Garland, v. 2, 294.
[3] Bouldin, 181.
[4] *Id.*, 50 (note). Nathan Loughborough MSS.

politician said that yet he could not help thinking him crazed, and added: "He arrived last night at his residence (Roanoke) in this neighborhood, having travelled fromWashington on horseback in two days, and, after looking at his multitude of horses, he set out about 8 o'clock on his return to Washington."[1] But, of course, the horseback ride between Washington and Roanoke must have consumed more than two days; for the distance is some 206 miles.

In his Diary, Randolph not only made fun of Charlotte County provincialisms of speech, but entered more than one specimen of violence inflicted upon poor Priscian's head by his fellow-congressmen, such as these: "The people of the Southern States *is* of too *laxative* a habit to enforce *sitch* a law." (Holland, of North Carolina.) "Heterogenous" (a laugh), corrected to "heterogoneous." (Sloan of New Jersey.) I will begin to *follow* the gentleman exactly in the place in which he *left* off." (Alston, of North Carolina.)

[1] May 19, 1826, *40 Years Fam. Letters*, 94.

CHAPTER XII

Randolph as a Candidate

As a candidate for Congress, Randolph was never but once defeated; but more than once he had an opponent. Until the Yazoo question begot discord among the Republicans, the prestige of his leadership in the House was too great to permit any Republican in his district really to feel that there was any hope of displacing him in the favor of his constituents. Such opposition as he had to face during this time was solely a Federalist one, which was too feeble to give him any trouble. But, with the split in the Republican party, produced by the Yazoo question, Randolph soon saw that, if he retained his seat, it was to be entirely by virtue of his own personal strength. On April 18, 1805, he wrote to Nicholson that he had been to none of the elections or public meetings since his return to Bizarre, but that *the good people* had again deputed him to serve them; and "by the blessing of God" so he would "at least as faithfully as Mr. Chase, of pious memory." But very different was the tone of a letter which he wrote to Nicholson a few months later, after his attention had been called to the movement, which was then under way, to drive him out of public life:

"Every engine has been set to work to undo me in the estimation of my constituents, and not without effect. W. C. N. [Wilson Cary Nicholas] and W. B. G. [William B. Giles] have been particularly active, and the storm, which has been so long gathering out of the District, has, at length, burst within it.

One of my nearest neighbors, after a year's duplicity that would not have disgraced a Mashusett, declared himself as my opponent on Monday (Prince Edward's Court day), during my absence at Roanoke. On Friday, I returned, and, the next day (July 23d), at a public meeting, in the neighborhood, he retracted. *Mais cela n'importe.* I am to have an adversary who will be announced in due season, that is as soon as a caucus shall have pitched upon the man. Mr. M's administration (for his election is looked upon as settled) is not to be subjected to the scrutiny and strictures of such an antagonist as I am supposed to be. *C'est écrit à là haut,* as *Jacques le fataliste* used to say. Whether I shall be able to withstand this decree of destiny, time alone can shew. I shall not be surprised or (on my own personal account) concerned if my numerous enemies succeed in their scheme against me. They have the press entirely under their control."[1]

Then followed the increased activity of Giles and others against him which finally culminated in the painful interview between Giles and Randolph narrated by Benjamin Watkins Leigh.

In 1808, the animus of the administration against Randolph had become so implacable that he had begun to question whether he was not doomed to political ruin.

"When I *do* come," he wrote to Nicholson in connection with a visit that he was thinking of paying to this friend on the Eastern shore of Maryland, "be assured that I shall avoid taking W. [Washington] in my way. The very name sickens me. Since my return, I find that certain great folks there, by means of letters to certain little folks here (aided too by the press), had contrived to excite considerable sensation in the district respecting me. I have been to several of the courts, and addressed the people on the subject of public affairs generally, and particularly of the misrepresentations which had gone abroad in regard to my conduct. The greater part of them seem satisfied on this last topic. I have been led to

[1] Bizarre, Aug. 25, 1805, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

draw this inference from various circumstances. At Buckingham, where I first appeared, the sentiment of the people was so strongly expressed that the gentleman, who was relied upon as my opponent, and who wished very much to have been brought forward, declared that he was not and would not be a candidate. As yet, therefore, the field is clear, but I shall not be at all disappointed or surprised if I should get hunted down by the Executive pack. I know that the victim has long been marked and the sacrifice resolved upon, and that nothing could give so much pleasure to the most powerful and formidable combination of men that this country has ever known as its accomplishment. The wonder with me, my dear friend, is that I have been able so long to withstand them."[1]

That he should have been able to do so is one of the marvels of American political history.

In 1809, for the first time, a Republican candidate came forward to contest Randolph's re-election to the House. This was Jerman Baker, Eppes' brother-in-law; but he was defeated by a vote of 1250 to 500.[2] In Charlotte County, he obtained only 72 votes as against Randolph's 332, and in Prince Edward County only 84 as against Randolph's 342.[3] Randolph, we are told, treated him with unusual courtesy and forbearance.[4] Moderation on the part of the strong is sometimes not more the offspring of their generosity than of the weakness of their antagonists. One clever sarcasm, however, has survived this contest. On one occasion, Baker, in a speech, had made profuse promises as to what he would do in case of election. "The gentleman and I," observed Randolph, "stand on very different ground. I stand on fourteen years' hard bought experience. He is in the land of promise which always flows with milk and honey."[5] In the same speech, Randolph remarked: "A new broom sweeps clean, but an old one knows where the dirt lies."[6]

[1] Bizarre, May 27, 1808, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.
[2] J. R. to Nicholson, Apr. 28, 1811, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.
[3] *Ibid.* [4] Bouldin, 52. [5] *Id.*, 52. [6] *Ibid.*

In 1811, Eppes, who had recently become domiciled in Randolph's district, allowed himself to be voted for as a candidate against Randolph, though he made no appeal to the people of the district from the hustings. Indeed, at the last moment, he authorized an announcement by his brother-in-law, Baker, who was a candidate for the Virginia Legislature instead of Congress at this election, on Pope's principle that who cannot woo the mistress must woo the maid, that he was not a candidate; but there can be little doubt that he had not only migrated into the District, as a part of the administration plan to outlaw Randolph, but that he permitted the use of his name at the polls. On Apr. 5, 1811, appeared this truculent editorial in the *Richmond Enquirer*, doubtless from the pen of Thomas Ritchie himself:

"We understand that a poll will be taken for Mr. Eppes by some of his friends in every county of the district lately represented, or rather misrepresented, by John Randolph. There is, to be sure, some little difference between the two men. Mr. Eppes is as much an ornament to Congress as Mr. Randolph is a nuisance and a curse."

But Ritchie soon experienced the chagrin of learning that the loyal freeholders of Randolph's District had rather be misrepresented by a curse like Randolph than represented by a blessing like Eppes; for, at the ensuing election in April, 1811, Randolph was re-elected to the House by a vote of 1081 to 514.[1] (*a*)

The administration, however, had lapped enough blood at this election to make it eager for more, and Randolph's violent hostility to the War of 1812, and the offence that it gave to the glowing patriotism of his constituents, finally enabled his enemies to compass his defeat in 1813. This time, Eppes began his canvass with a temperate

[1] J. R. to Nicholson, Roanoke, Apr. 25, 1811, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

address to the people of Randolph's District, in which he reviewed the events leading up to our declaration of war,[1] and the address was seconded by every species of electioneering known to the political artifices of that day. In a letter to Josiah Quincy, Randolph expressed the opinion that his opponent had struck him below the belt, but the letter was written when he was smarting under the first sting of defeat.

"I have to tell you," he said, "that my election is lost. The emissaries of government have been silently and secretly at work since last autumn, and, while my friends indulged in a fatal security, they have been undermined. My opponent has descended to the lowest and most disgraceful means—riding from house to house and attending day and night meetings in the cabins and hovels of the lowest of the people. He was present at fourteen of these preachings (seven of them held at night) the week before election. . . . At the election for this county (Prince Edward) yesterday, Mr. E. [Eppes] said I had charged the administration with being under French influence. In reply, I told the freeholders that I would prove it and did to their satisfaction. A notorious villain, named Tom Logwood, from Buckingham, who was committed to the penitentiary some years ago for forging bank-notes of the United States (I was on his jury), undertook to speak impertinently to me when on the bench. He had been seen laughing, talking and drinking with E. [Eppes] at Buckingham. (N.B. Mr. Jefferson released him by a pardon.) I never saw such indignation. The scoundrel was obliged to take to his heels, and make his escape home, or he would have been beaten to a jelly. Ignorant people were made to believe that the British fleet had come into the Chesapeake to aid my election."[2]

When Eppes first came forward as his opponent, Randolph was confident of success. (*a*) "For my own re-election," he wrote to Josiah Quincy, "I have no

[1] *Rich. Enq.*, Aug. 7, 1812.

[2] Farmville, Va., Apr. 19, 1813. *Life of Quincy*, 329.

fears."[1] But he soon realized that, if the day was to be won, it was to be by stark fighting, and he electioneered as actively as Eppes himself. One of the most zealous of Eppes' supporters was the Rev. Mr. Dabbs, a Baptist minister, who introduced him to many Baptist and other voters to whom Eppes was a stranger; and who did not hesitate to take Eppes with him to many places where he had appointments to preach. Randolph, it is said by James W. Bouldin, one of his neighbors, countered by courting the support of the Presbyterians and occasionally sitting under the ministrations of the Rev. Mr. Hoge, the Presbyterian President of Hampden-Sidney; lauding him more frequently and openly, Bouldin thought, than he would have done if he had not been a candidate.[2] From Randolph's strain of conversation on these occasions, one who did not know him might have supposed, we are told by another neighbor of his, that he was about to join the Presbyterian communion; but he invariably wound up, this contemporary admits, by stating emphatically that "having been born in the Church of England, he did not mean to renounce it." At times, according to James W. Bouldin, he changed his tack. On one occasion, when it was rumored that Dabbs was about to appear at a religious meeting at Sandy Creek Church in Prince Edward with Eppes in tow, Hugh Wyllie, a Scotchman, and a great friend of Randolph, communicated this rumor to Randolph and invited him to be present too. In reply, Randolph wrote that he should be glad to take part in the religious services on such an occasion, but that he could not violate the Sabbath by profanely visiting the House of God for electioneering purposes.[4] This note, we are told, was circulated among the members of the Sandy Creek Church congregation, and was read with approbation by most of them Of course, there may be quite as much

[1] Roanoke, Aug. 16, 1812, *Id.*, 270.
[2] Bouldin, 49. [3] *Id.*, 37. [4] *Id.*, 49.

electioneering policy in remaining away from a religious meeting on such an occasion as in attending it. Randolph also made a point during this contest of attending musters and other secular gatherings; and he did not always receive a cordial greeting at them.

"I went with him on one occasion to a muster near where I was born," says James W. Bouldin. "He did not address the people; nearly all at that place were opposed to him. He took me aside and asked me whether he had best address them. I told him I thought not. He talked however freely and familiarly with the people on various subjects. He had much to say to a certain lady who was present—very intelligent but I thought a little hysterical. He was polite and respectful to her, as he was always to ladies while in their presence. I never saw him show so plainly his desire to make himself agreeable and acceptable as on this occasion."[1]

Eppes had been the administration leader, or one of the administration leaders, on the floor of the House, and was an able and generally respected man; but the contrast that he offered to Randolph, when they were pitted against each other on the hustings, makes it difficult for us to think of him as possesssing "the ready, fluent, and impassioned eloquence" which Sawyer attributes to him.[2] If he proved himself a "very popular speaker" in this contest, to recall another judgment of Sawyer, the evidence of the fact certainly left no impression of its existence behind it in Randolph's District. On the other hand, there is abundant testimony to show that, when Randolph awoke to the danger of defeat, he struggled as the lion struggles when he is straining his whole muscular coat to release himself from the toils. A young man, who was a student at Hampden-Sidney College at the time, declares that, on one occasion, when Randolph was speaking in Prince Edward, he stood on his feet for three hours,

[1] Bouldin, 50. [2] P. 41.

unconscious of the flight of time, and was borne along on the tide of Randolph's impassioned eloquence as helplessly as a feather upon the bosom of a cataract.[1] Of the extraordinary effect produced by this speech we shall cite some further testimony hereafter. This is the account given by James W. Bouldin of a speech delivered by Randolph at Charlotte Court House during this same contest:

"There was great expectation from the orators, especially from Mr. Randolph. My door was immediately in view of the rostrum where he always stood to speak. The people began to draw around this place to be sure of a stand near it very early in the morning. While he was walking backward and forward, his eyes flashing with more and more brilliancy, as the crowd became larger and larger, he exclaimed: 'The subject is so large I do not know where to lay hold on it first.' It was still early; but said I, 'Sir, you see the crowd is gathered around the stand, and, if you do not begin, Eppes will begin first, and read until sunset, and you will be wearied to death before you get a chance to say a word.' He immediately made his way through the crowd, which was at this time large and dense, and commenced his address. I was much engaged at the time, and did not go out until he had nearly gotten through. I do not know how Mr. Eppes appeared elsewhere and in comparison with others; but, compared with Mr. Randolph, and on the hustings, I thought him dull and heavy. He was self-possessed and much of a gentleman, but I thought greatly inferior to Randolph in eloquence and ability."[2]

"Mr. Eppes," we are told by W. B. Green, a contemporary of Randolph, "brought with him from Washington what was called a *cart-load of authorities*, laid the books on the stile in front of the court house—large tomes and documents such as had never been seen by the natives. This was about 55 years ago. There was an immense crowd present. Natives and foreigners from all the surrounding and adjoining counties came to hear Mr. Randolph speak, and to see the son-in-law of Thomas Jefferson.

[1] Garland, v. 1, 311. [2] Bouldin, 50.

"Eppes led off from the stile, knee deep in books and documents. He was rather a dull speaker, read too much and fatigued the people. Mr. Randolph in reply remarked: 'The gentleman is a very good reader.'"[1] (*a*)

This contest between Randolph and Eppes was attended with a high degree of popular excitement, and was accompanied by at least two exhibitions of his dauntless intrepidity. At a meeting at Charlotte Court House, Randolph's pointed language provoked an interruption by Col. Gideon Spencer, a friend of Eppes. High words ensued, and, above the tumult of the crowd, which was excited to such a degree that a collision between the respective adherents of the candidates seemed imminent, some friend of Randolph shouted: "Stand firm and keep cool!" "I am as cool as the centre seed of a cucumber," was his reply.[2] After the speaking had come to an end, Randolph made a point of remaining on the court green, and the excitement became greater than ever. He had an overseer at the time, a big, rough man, who was present, and towered head and shoulders above the persons about him. This man, armed with a horse-whip, brandished in a threatening manner, followed Randolph about through the surging assemblage, insisting that the latter would be attacked, and should be protected; despite the fact that Randolph himself bade him be quiet.[3]

At this same meeting, or at some other meeting during this contest, Randolph declared that Eppes had been imported like a stallion into the district for the purpose of being run against him. There was no necessity for such a step, he said, and he asked: "Where are your Daniels, your Bouldins and your Carringtons?" "And your Spencers," interrupted Col. Gideon Spencer. "Yes, and your Spencers," rejoined Randolph, "always excepting you, Colonel." At this sally, the Colonel was about

[1] Bouldin, 27. [2] *Id.*, 28. [3] *Id.*, 28.

to break out into an exclamation of rage, when above the roar of the crowd the shrill sarcastic voice of Randolph was heard saying: "Let him alone Fellow-Citizens, a barking dog never bites." That he was satisfied with the results of this encounter, we may infer from the entry relating to it which he made in his Diary, under date of Sept. 5, 1812: "Court. Meet Eppes. Episode of Gideon Spencer. 'The sword of Gideon not the sword of the Lord.'"

The scene of the other instance of Randolph's fearlessness was Buckingham Court House. Here, he was menaced with personal violence, should he attempt to make an address, and was advised to retire. "You know very little of me," he said, "or you would not give such advice." Soon proclamation was made that he would address the people, and, on the outskirts of the throng, which gathered about him, when he mounted the rostrum, was an element that evidently meditated insult or violence. "I understand," he began, "that I am to be insulted, if I attempt to address the people; that a mob is prepared to lay their rude hands upon me, and drag me from these hustings for daring to exercise the rights of a freeman." Then, fixing his eye upon the individuals, who were disposed to assail him, and, pointing his forefinger at them, he continued: "My Bible teaches me that the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, but that the fear of man is the consummation of folly."[1] Not a hand was lifted to molest him, and he completed his speech uninterrupted.

Randolph was defeated by such a small majority that he expressed the belief in his Diary that, if he had not been kept from attending the election at Cumberland Court by a fire, which had recently destroyed the Bizarre home, he would have been elected.

When the Congressional election of 1815 was drawing on, a number of the most respectable inhabitants of Charlotte

[1] Garland, v. 1, 310.

County presented an address to Randolph, asking him to announce himself as a candidate for his former seat; which he did. "My opponent [Eppes] will beat me not quite so far as before," he wrote to Tazewell (April 7, 1815).[1] But again his prognosis was at fault, and he beat Eppes. A few months afterwards, however, Eppes was elected to the United States Senate. "Men of all political parties," wrote Randolph to Quincy, 'agree that he is indebted to me for his seat. So that, if I am not *great* myself, I am the cause of greatness in others."[2]

In 1817, when Randolph had declined re-election and expected to go off soon to Europe, he rode around to the different elections in his District, and addressed the people in the morning, in advance of Archibald Austin, who was to succeed him

"These addresses," James W. Bouldin informs us, "were of a character wholly different from any made by him on any other occasion that I ever knew of. They were filled with grave and solemn advice and the most pathetic appeals to the sympathies of the District without the least allusion to party or feud."[3]

In 1819, when Randolph was re-elected to the House, Austin was his opponent and received only 4 of the 242 votes cast in Prince Edward County, and only 57 of the 257 votes cast in Charlotte County. Among the interesting entries in Randolph's Diary, is one containing the names of different individuals whose support he lost at this election; showing, to use the slang of our own time, that he looked after his "political fences" pretty much as every other Congressman does.

When Randolph was defeated for re-election to the United States Senate, Dr. James Waddell Alexander was an occasional visitor to Charlotte County, and his

[1] Littleton Waller Tazewell, Jr., MSS.
[2] Richm., Dec. 8, 1815, *Life of Quincy*, 364.
[3] Bouldin, 53.

letters to Dr. Hall give us a good idea of the feelings with which the catastrophe was received by Randolph's constituents in that County.

"Were I to commence with the topics most current here," he said, "I should speak of Mr. Randolph. His recent defeat has filled this county with chagrin, and he will be returned for the lower House without competition. All the freeholders hereabouts treat the subject as if it were their own personal cause."[1]

[1] Retirement, Charlotte Co., Jan. 26, 1827, *40 Years Fam. Letters*, 96.

JOHN RANDOLPH

From the portrait by Chester Harding.
Corcoran Art Gallery, Washington, D. C.

CHAPTER XIII

Virginia Convention of 1829–30

But Randolph was still to serve for a brief season in another deliberative body. In 1829, he was elected to the Convention which assembled in the State Capitol at Richmond on Monday, Oct. 5, in that year, for the purpose of revising the existing constitution of Virginia, which had been adopted in 1776. The Electoral District which he was chosen, with Wm. Leigh and Richard Logan, of Halifax County, and Richard N. Venable, of Prince Edward County, to represent, was composed of Charlotte, Halifax, and Prince Edward Counties. To the people at large of Halifax County, though he had some close personal friends in that County, he was an entire stranger; yet such was his fame, as a statesman and orator, that he came within 13 votes of obtaining the same number of votes in Halifax County as Wm. Leigh, a resident of that county, of the very highest standing as a man and a lawyer, and, in the whole district, he received a larger number of votes than any one of the three candidates who were elected with him to represent it; Leigh receiving the next highest number.[1] Among his defeated competitors, were James Bruce and General Edward Carrington of Halifax County. (*a*)

At first, Randolph appears to have been averse to becoming a candidate for the seat in the Convention, despite the fact that, in his address to his constituents

[1] Letter from J. R. to J. R. Clay, June 12, 1829, Libr. Cong.

in 1826, when he was leaving the United States for Europe, he had expressed his readiness to be one of its members, if it was called, on account of his interest in the preservation of freehold suffrage. "I shall probably not be in the Convention," he wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough. "I am sick of public affairs and public men, and have no opinion of constitutions ready-made or made to order."[1] A few weeks later, he wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough more fully in the same strain:

"Tom Miller," he said, "writes this morning that the Convention Bill has passed, and that my friends expect me to be a candidate for a seat in that body. If anyone can and will devise a plan by which abler and better men shall be necessarily brought into our councils, I will hail him as my *Magnus Apollo!* But, as I have no faith in any such scheme, and a thorough detestation and contempt for political metaphysics, and for an arithmetical and geometrical constitution, I shall wash my hands of all such business. The rest of my life, if not passed in peace, shall not be spent in legislative wrangling. I am determined absolutely not to expose myself to collision where victory could offer no honor."[2]

But, in a later letter to Dr. Brockenbrough, he informed him that one of his friends had announced at Charlotte Court House that he had consented to serve if elected, and that, to save the feelings of a man of as much truth and honor as breathed, and to avoid injuring certain friends and interests, which the withdrawal of his name would, it seemed, occasion, he was fain even to let it stand at the risk of incurring the imputation of fickleness.[3]

Of course, the full truth was that the appeal to his good feeling, arising out of the incident, to which he alluded, had been persuasively seconded by the force of habit, the reviving relish for political excitement, and the emulous

[1] Jan. 6, 1829, Garland; v. 2, 316.
[2] Feb. 12, 1829, Garland, v. 2, 318.
[3] April 21 & 28, 1829, Garland, v. 2, 322, 323.

desire to drink delight of battle once more with his peers upon the ringing plains of Windy Troy, which induce almost every public man, after a brief interval of retirement, to look back wistfully to the theatre of his former achievements, even though decadent body and mind warn him that, if he returns to it, he will soon, like "the poor nigh-related guest," who has "outstayed his welcome," be telling the jest without the smile.

To a Virginian the time-stained, faded volume, which contains the debates of the Virginia Convention of 1829–30, is very much what some rare illuminated missal is to an adoring nun. And, all local self-conceit aside, there can be no doubt that these debates constitute one of the most remarkable gifts that the political genius of the Anglo-Saxon race has ever made to Parliamentary History. To reach this conclusion, there is no need that the *ipse dixit* of anyone, Virginian or otherwise, should be accepted. All that the skeptic need do is to take up the volume itself, with a mind not completely sealed to persuasion, and to read the imperishable record of those discussions, in which the proper basis and distribution of representation, the reorganization of the Executive and Judicial Departments of the State Government, and other constitutional questions of high import were agitated with a range of knowledge, a philosophic breadth and insight, a strength and clearness of reasoning, an animated eloquence, an academic gloss, and a punctilious courtesy such as has rarely distinguished any convention, parliament, or congress in the annals of free institutions.

If anyone doubts that the quasi-aristocratic society, developed in Virginia by the institution of slavery, was remarkably productive of intellectual pre-eminence and leadership, let him but peruse the great arguments delivered in this convention, and note what an overwhelming majority of the extraordinary men, who delivered them, sprang not from the Trans-Alleghany portions

of Virginia, where the influence of slave institutions was scarcely felt, or from the surpassingly fertile territory known as the Valley of Virginia, where the slave population was not abundant, but from the thin, impoverished fields of those eastern portions of Virginia, where the large slave population exercised a plastic influence of controlling power upon the mental, moral and industrial characteristics of their people.

From quite an early era in the history of Virginia, fundamental differences of origin, environment, and interest had drawn a clear line of separation between the parts of Virginia, which came to be known in the contentions of the Convention as the West and the East respectively. With its lack of slaves, its more democratic conditions, and its growing sense of expanding wealth and population, the West insisted upon free white suffrage as the only proper basis for representation, and assailed with unanswerable logic the anomalous provisions of the existing Constitution, which gave to Warwick County, the least populous county in the State, the same number of representatives in the House of Delegates as the most populous county in the State. On the other hand, the East, long habituated to political dominion, instinct with the patrician and exclusive spirit fostered by slavery, and jealous of the waxing power of the West, insisted that the basis of representation should be compounded partly of numbers and partly of property. In its essence, the conflict was merely a phase of the sectional antagonism engendered by slavery which had flared up luridly like a blast furnace at night in the struggle over the Missouri Compromise, and was to manifest itself in still more baleful forms in the future.

What the basis of representation should be was the pivot upon which the discussions of the Convention mainly revolved; though many other questions of great importance were debated by its members, such as the

expediency of enlarging the existing freehold right of suffrage, making the Governor eligible by the People, reorganizing the judicial system of the State, confirming the power of the Legislature to proscribe duelling, and excluding clergymen from the Legislature.

On the day of the first session of the Convention, James Monroe was nominated by James Madison as its President, and, being elected *nem. con.*, was conducted to the chair by Madison and Chief Justice Marshall.[1]

When the Committees, among which the business of the convention was distributed, were appointed, John Randolph was made one of the members of "The Committee to Consider the Legislative Department of the Government," which consisted of 24 members in all, including James Madison, its chairman, John Tyler, Littleton Waller Tazewell, Benjamin Watkins Leigh, and Chapman Johnson.[2]

By Garland we are told that in the Senate Chamber of the Capitol, which was the room used by this committee, before the sessions of the Convention were shifted to the African Baptist Church on Broad Street, to make room for the assembling of the Legislature, Randolph was accustomed to sit, not at the long table, along which the other members of the committee ranged themselves below Madison, who sat at its head, but at some distance away in a corner of the room from which he observed everything that went on with the vigilance of a watchful cat; breaking in occasionally, however, upon the discussions of the Committee with his startling intonations.[3] In the hall, where the Convention sat, his deportment was equally peculiar.

"He declares," said a newspaper correspondent of the time, "his determination to take no part in the proceedings of the

[1] *Debates*, 1. [2] *Id.*, 22.
[3] Garland, v. 2, 326.

Convention, and takes his seat every day at the back of the President's chair entirely out of the range of the speakers; unable, however, to contain himself entirely, he is every now and then heard in a shrill undertone either prompting and encouraging his friends or criticising his opponents. He is annoyed by the numberless visitors of both sexes that crowd the lobby, the gallery and the vacant seats of the hall, and no little merriment was excited the other day when his voice was heard amid the crowd at the door exclaiming: 'Mr. Sergeant, I will thank you to put me into the Convention!'"[1]

Nineteen days after the Convention assembled, the Legislative Committee reported a series of resolutions; one of which declared that, in the apportionment of representation in the House of Delegates, regard should be had to the white population exclusively; another that the number of the members of the Senate should neither be increased nor diminished; nor their classification changed; and another that the right of suffrage should continue to be exercised by all who enjoyed it under the existing Constitution, and should be extended to certain male freeholders and leaseholders who did not then enjoy it, and to housekeepers and heads of families who paid taxes.[2]

The first of these three resolutions signified a sweeping practical triumph for the West in the Committee Room; for it rejected the suggestion that property should be an ingredient in the basis of representation and gave to the thriving white communities of the West an opportunity to acquire a preponderance of political power in the most numerous branch of the State Legislature. The second signified a practical triumph for the East because the cast-iron uniformity of county representation, which it prescribed for the less numerous branch of the Legislature, was a lock-chain which the older and more numerous

[1] *Wm. F. Gordon*, by Armistead C. Gordon, 175.

[2] *Debates*, 39.

counties of the East could apply to the wheel of the Lower House whenever it suited their pleasure to do so. The third did not signify such an important triumph for the West as the first; for the extensions of the suffrage, which it approved, were to operate uniformly in the East as well as the West; but it was the harbinger of future practical triumphs for the Democratic West in that it was a step in the direction of universal white suffrage.

The conflict in the committee room over the proper basis of representation for the House and the Senate had been a desperately close one. The partisans of the West thought that representation in both houses should be based upon white population exclusively; the partisans of the East that it should be based partly upon property too. The resolution favoring white population as the sole basis of representation for the House of Delegates was adopted by a vote of 13 to 11; Madison voting with the West and Randolph with the East; and the resolution favoring white population as the sole basis of representation for the Senate also was defeated by a tie vote of 12 to 12; Madison this time voting with the East.[1]

On Oct. 26, 1829, the Convention, on the motion of Philip Doddridge, of Brooke County, proceeded to consider the report of the Committee,[2] and when the resolution was read, which declared that, in the apportionment of representation in the House of Delegates, regard should be had to the white population exclusively, John W. Green, of Culpeper County, moved an amendment, striking out the word "exclusively," and adding in lieu of it the words "and taxation combined."[3] With this proposition, was set in motion a debate, which, in one controversial form or another, went on day after day; eliciting as it went a display of knowledge and power of statement, reasoning, and eloquence worthy of the highest degree of admiration,

[1] *Wm F. Gordon*, by Gordon, 160, citing Niles' *Register* of Oct. 24, 1829.
[2] *Debates*, 45. [3] *Id.*, 53.

and finally, after various propositions looking to a compromise between the East and West had been offered by John R. Cooke, of Frederick County, Abel P. Upshur, of Northampton County, John Marshall, of the City of Richmond, and Benjamin Watkins Leigh, of Chesterfield County, respectively, ending in the adoption of a resolution offered by Wm. Fitzhugh Gordon, of Albemarle County, which, when embodied in the instrument finally adopted by the Convention and ratified by the People, simply provided that the House of Delegates should consist of 134 members, to be annually chosen in certain fixed numbers respectively by the 26 counties, lying West of the Alleghany Mountains, the 14 counties, lying between the Alleghany and Blue Ridge Mountains, the 29 counties, lying east of the Blue Ridge Mountains, and above tidewater, and the counties, cities, towns, and boroughs lying upon tidewater; and that the Senate should consist of 32 members, to be chosen in accordance with a system of classification and rotation which we need not detail; of whom 13 were to be elected by the counties, lying west of the Blue Ridge Mountains, and 19 by the counties, cities, towns, and boroughs, lying east of those mountains.[1]

Whatever may be the countervailing merits of universal suffrage in the long reckoning, and, in our opinion, they are decisive, it may well be doubted whether such a body of men as that which constituted this Convention could have been brought together for their task, even at a time when the counties of Virginia had a much higher degree of intellectual and social prestige than they have today, as compared with urban centers, except by the system of freehold suffrage which had prevailed in Virginia since the establishment of the Commonwealth, and which vested the power of selecting delegates to this Convention in the hands of a comparatively small number of intelligent, propertied, and responsible electors, who, as a rule, were better edu-

[1] *Debates*, 704, 897, 898.

cated than the mass of men about them, had a direct pecuniary stake involved in all the operations of the government to which they were amenable, and, under the sway of the self-respecting impulses nurtured by the extraordinary privilege that they enjoyed, took a genuine pride in selecting, as their public representatives, truly worthy and able men.

In calling the Convention of 1829–30, the one thought of the Virginia freeholders was to collect at the State Capitol, for the purpose of revising the organic law of the State, the very best agents, which they could find for that great and delicate duty, without regard to any of those secondary considerations, founded upon mere wealth or fugitive elements of personal popularity or unpopularity, which are so potent in conciliating the favor or arousing the dislike of pure democracies. (*a*) In some instances, delegates to the Convention were elected from counties in which they did not reside at all. The result was a convention in which were, to begin with, two men—James Madison and James Monroe—who had filled the office of President of the United States; a man—John Tyler—who was afterwards to fill it; John Marshall, the Chief Justice of the United States, and 4 Governors of Virginia, 7 United States Senators, 11 judges, and 15 members of the House of Representatives, past, present, or future.[1] In running over the list of the members of the Convention, it is surprising to find how few of them had not acquired, or were not soon to acquire, a conspicuous national reputation, or as great a reputation as any man can ever hope to acquire in public life who has never occupied some important post under the National Government. Even where members of the Convention had won neither National nor State fame, they were, in almost every instance, we believe, elected from the districts which they represented because the freeholders, who elected them,

[1] Little's "Hist. of Richmond," *So. Lit. Mess.* 18, 107.

deemed them, with good reason, to be the best exponents of their interests and feelings upon whom their confidence could be bestowed.

Among the members of the Convention, other than James Madison, James Monroe, John Tyler, Chief Justice Marshall, and John Randolph himself, were: Littleton Waller Tazewell, who, besides being one of the great lawyers of his day, was, in the course of his career, Governor of Virginia and a distinguished Senator from Virginia, and who would have been still more distinguished, if he had not repelled celebrity as assiduously as celebrity courted him; Abel P. Upshur, the successor, during the Tyler administration, of Daniel Webster, as Secretary of State, whose splendid powers were extinguished by the explosion on the *Princeton*, just as they were finding a sufficiently spacious field for their exercise; Wm. B. Giles, who had been a Senator from Virginia, and was then Governor of Virginia, and who was deemed by both Jefferson and Randolph the most accomplished debater in Congress of his time; (*a*) Philip P. Barbour, who was elected to preside over the Convention, when Monroe found himself physically unequal to its duties, and who was, in the course of his career, Speaker of the House of Representatives and an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States; Benjamin Watkins Leigh, also one of the great lawyers of his day, and a Senator from Virginia for too short a time to secure the full measure of national reputation, to which his learning and shining gifts as a speaker entitled him, but long enough to deliver a speech, in the course of the discussion of the resolution, whereby Thomas H. Benton sought to expunge the censure, with which Andrew Jackson had been visited at the hands of the United States Senate, that Henry A. Wise, in his *Seven Decades of the Union*, thinks was superior to any other delivered upon the same subject; James Pleasants, who was, in the course of his career, a member of the

United States Senate and Governor of Virginia; John Y. Mason, who was, in the course of his career, Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives, Secretary of the Navy under the Tyler administration, Attorney General of the United States under the Polk administration, Minister to France from the United States, an United States District Judge, and also the President of the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1850; Alexander Campbell, the celebrated Baptist divine, and John Wickham, Chapman Johnson, Robert Stanard, and Robert Barraud Taylor, (*a*) four great lawyers whose speeches in the convention show that they were not only great lawyers but men of rare general endowments besides. Other notable members of the convention, who, in one way or another, were individuals of real distinction in their time, were: Wm. Fitzhugh Gordon, of Albemarle County, the author of the compromise reached by the convention in the discussion over the basis of representation, and, afterwards, the first promoter in the House of Representatives of the Federal Sub-treasury System; Philip Doddridge, of Brooke County, one of the ablest champions of the West; John R. Cooke, of Frederick County, a native of Bermuda and a gifted lawyer, whose scholarly tastes were transmitted to his sons Philip Pendleton Cooke, the author of the exquisite lyric beginning, "I have loved thee long and dearly, Florence Vane," and John Esten Cooke, the author of *Surry of Eagle's Nest;* Alfred H. Powell, of Frederick County; Wm. H. Brodnax, of Dinwiddie County; George C. Dromgoole, of Brunswick County; Mark Alexander, of Mecklenburg County; Wm. O. Goode, of Mecklenburg County; Briscoe G. Baldwin, of Augusta County; Charles F. Mercer, of Loudon County; Wm. H. Fitzhugh, of Fairfax County; Richard Morris, of Hanover County; Lewis Summers, of Kanawha County; John S. Barbour, of Culpeper County; John W. Green, of Culpeper County; John Scott, of Fau-

quier County; Lucas P. Thompson, of Amherst County; Thomas R. Joynes, of Accomac County, and Wm. Leigh, of Halifax County, who was considered by some of his contemporaries the mental peer, in more than one respect, of his more brilliant brother, Benjamin Watkins Leigh.

But neither James Madison, the sole survivor of the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1776, the sole survivor, with two exceptions, of the Convention, which adopted the Federal Constitution, in which he had been such a great figure, and the sole survivor, with four exceptions, of the Virginia Convention of 1788, that ratified the Federal Constitution; nor James Monroe, whose conspicuous career is such a good illustration of the old adage that it is better to be born lucky than rich; nor the great Chief Justice; nor such masters of logic or rhetoric as Abel P. Upshur, Benjamin Watkins Leigh, Chapman Johnson, John Wickham, Littleton Waller Tazewell, Wm. B. Giles, Robert Barraud Taylor, John R. Cooke, Robert Stanard, Richard Morris, Philip Doddridge, and John Scott excited any such degree of public interest as did John Randolph of Roanoke, whose unique face and figure, salient idiosyncracies of intellect, character, and temper, stormy and dramatic career, and social and plantation relief, to say nothing of his reputation for eloquence and wit, made him, even in that assembly, as Baldwin has said, the cynosure of all eyes. And it is impossible to think of Randolph in the Convention without recalling how closely he had been associated, for good or for evil, with many of the most prominent of the individuals who sat about him. Presiding over it during the earlier stages of its sessions, was the man—James Monroe—at whom he had hissed "Judas" in his Diary. Presiding over it, during the later stages of its sessions, was the man—Philip P. Barbour—whom he had grouped with "Tray, Blanche, and Sweetheart," when he turned upon the angry pack that was yelping and

snapping at his heels at the time of the Compensation Bill. At the head of the Legislative Committee, was the man—James Madison—whom he had unavailingly endeavored, at the expense of every consideration of political prudence, to shut out from the Presidency. Seated in the same hall with him, too, was Wm. B. Giles, who had drained the cup of humiliation to the very dregs in atonement for his effort to deprive him of his seat in the House of Representatives. Robert Barraud Taylor still bore about with him the bullet which Randolph had lodged in his body at William and Mary. Five members of the Convention—Littleton Waller Tazewell, James M. Garnett, of Essex County, Wm. Leigh, of Halifax County, and Mark Alexander, of Mecklenburg County, and John Wickham, of Richmond—had been five of Randolph's most intimate friends. Chief Justice Marshall had known him from the beginning of his career, had admired him as the placid moon might admire the fiery dog star, had sat beside his bed when both his body and mind seemed hopelessly distempered, and, though an unbending Federalist, had in return received from him a measure of affectionate veneration which not only termed him a "great and good man," as he truly was, but, to the amusement of the cultivated and elegant Mrs. Dr. Brockenbrough, as "one of the best bred men alive."[1] Two other members of the Convention—John R. Cooke and Chapman Johnson—were soon to be engaged in the long wrangle which was to take place over Randolph's wills. Look where Randolph might in the convention, his eye met some eye in which his boundless capacity for both hatred and love had been reflected at one time or another.

"The great matters in agitation here," wrote a newspaper correspondent, while the convention was in session, "make me forget the talent and eloquence displayed in the arena. They

[1] Garland, v. 2, 295.

are extraordinary; from all parts of this State, and from many of the other States, people are daily flocking here in vast multitudes; men and women crowd the hall and gallery of the Convention as at some vast show or theatre. All feel a deep interest in the matters of debate; and the discussions are not only in the Convention, but in the boarding-houses, taverns, shops, public streets and market places."[1]

And Randolph, there can be no doubt, was the man whom these multitudes were most desirous of seeing and hearing. This is what Hugh R. Pleasants, a Richmond editor, who followed the proceedings of the Convention, has to say upon that point:

"But the man who commanded most interest of all—who was literally the hero of the convention—to whom every eye was turned, and whose slightest motion was watched with intense anxiety, was John Randolph. His reputation was probably more widely spread than that of any other in the convention, with the exception of the two ex-Presidents and the Chief Justice—he was known to be an unrivalled orator—but as yet he had been heard by comparatively few Virginians. His career had been national, and he had never been in the State Legislature. The anxiety to hear him among all classes of persons, strangers as well as citizens, amounted almost to frenzy. Many persons, greatly to their own inconvenience, remained in town days longer than they would otherwise have been induced to do. It was supposed that he would answer Chapman Johnson's first great speech, and a crowd thronged to the capitol, such as we never saw there before, and never expect to see again. Ladies were absolutely packed into the galleries and the spare seats in the hall. There was no room even to breathe, much less to turn around. From some unaccountable caprice, upon that day, he condescended not to speak, and the crowd retired as much disappointed as though they had been to see a man hung, and had been cheated of the spectacle by the ill-timed clemency of the Governor. Another

[1] *Wm. F. Gordon*, by Gordon, p. 164.

day, and still another passed; and the oracle continued dumb. At last—when nobody was expecting it—when the lobby and the galleries were almost deserted—when some long-winded speaker had just concluded a tedious harangue, he rose slowly from his seat and pronounced the words, 'Mr. President.' Never have we seen two words produce the same effect. We had entered the hall but a few minutes before, and had met scarcely a man in our way. We do not believe there were a dozen persons visible in the streets from the windows of the Capitol. Where the crowd came from, or how they got intelligence that Randolph had the floor, we could never learn, but it poured in like the waters of the ocean when the dyke gives away. Persons who were on the street afterwards informed us that they saw persons running from all quarters, and, not being able to find where they were running to, fell in with, and assisted to form, the multitude that streamed to the Capitol. Notwithstanding the immense crowd, the audience was as still as death, save when it indulged itself in shouts of laughter. The clear, distinct enunciation of the speaker enabled everyone to hear every word he uttered, while his admirable acting changed his most airy nothings into golden precepts. Never before did we so clearly comprehend the force of the Demosthenian 'action! action!' The unaccountable brilliancy of Mr. Randolph's eyes—their petrifying effect upon those [upon] whom he chose to fix them in anger or disdain—the melody of his inimitable voice—his tall, unearthly-looking figure and the shake of his bony finger have been often described, but no man, who never heard him, and saw him, speak, can form the slightest conception of what he was. A person, who was deeply prejudiced against him, said to us, when he sat down that day: 'Good God! What an orator!' And another declared that he believed Randolph was inspired."[1]

The laughter, mentioned by Pleasants, was doubtless excited by the satire of which Randolph made Chapman Johnson the victim. Johnson was a native of Louisa County, which was in the East, but had taken up his resi-

[1] *Southern Lit. Mess.*, v. 17, 148.

dence in Augusta County, which was in the West, and, while residing there, had represented in the State Senate the district of which Augusta County was a part. During this time, though at first favorable to the call of the Convention, he had subsequently become opposed to it because of the passage of a bill rearranging the senatorial districts of the State, which he thought gratified all the reasonable demands of the West at that time in the matter of representation. Afterwards, he had sided with the East in its efforts to stave off the Convention, and had actively supported a substitute, which his friend, Benjamin Watkins Leigh, had proposed at a public meeting in Richmond for certain resolutions favoring a convention, which had been offered at the meeting, and were finally adopted by it. When delegates were elected to the Convention, he had removed from Augusta County to Richmond, but such was the confidence of his old friends and neighbors in his wisdom and fairness that he was elected by the freeholders of the convention district, composed of Augusta, Rockbridge, and Pendleton Counties, to represent them. Naturally enough, under the circumstances, it was expected by the East that, if he did not fully champion its cause, he would at least be more or less neutral in the conflict between the two sections of the State. But, greatly to the disappointment of the East, he became one of the most effective mouthpieces of the West in the Convention, and, when Randolph arose to make his first speech in it, Johnson had delivered a lucid and cogent but very lengthy argument in behalf of the white basis of representation, in the beginning of which he had been so imprudent as to say that the conflict between the East and West came down simply to a contest which involved the great and agitating question as to whether the sceptre should pass away from Judah or a lawgiver from between her feet.[1] No better mark, of course, could have offered

[1] *Debates*, 257.

itself for the consummate powers of sarcasm, of which Randolph was such a merciless master. "The Gentleman from Augusta told us yesterday, I believe, or the day before, or the day before that; I really do not remember which," is one variation of the uncertain terms as to the time consumed by Johnson in which Randolph repeatedly, in the course of his speech, in reply to points made by Johnson, ridiculed the extent to which the latter had invoked the attention of his fellow-members. Finally, he is reported as saying:

"The gentleman told us the day before yesterday that in 15 minutes of the succeeding day he would conclude all he had to say; and he then kept us two hours, not by the Shrewsbury clock, but by as good a watch as can be made in the City of London (drawing out and opening his watch). As 15 minutes are to 2 hours—in the proportion of 1 to 8—such is the approximation to truth in the gentleman's calculations."[1]

This was dramatic and amusing enough, but it probably did not provoke so much laughter as this polished raillery:

"The gentleman from Augusta, who occupies so large a space both in the time and in the eye of the House, has told us that he fought gallantly by the side of his noble friend from Chesterfield (Leigh), so long as victory was possible, and it was not until he was conquered that he grounded his arms. The gentleman farther told us that, finding his native country and his early friends on this side of the mountain, on whose behalf he had waged that gallant war, he found he hesitated what part to take *now* until his constituents, aye, Sir, and more than that, his property on the other side—and he has taken his course accordingly. Well, Sir, and will he not allow on our part that some consideration is due to our constituents, although they happen to be our neighbors; or *to our property*, although we reside upon it. Are either or both less dear on that account? But, Sir, I put it to the Committee whether

[1] *Debates*, 316.

the gentleman is not mistaken in point of fact, whether the victory *is* indeed won? Everyone, to be sure, is the best judge whether he is beaten or not, but I put it to the gentleman himself whether, if he were now fighting alongside of his noble friend from Chesterfield, the scale might not possibly turn the other way? No man, however, is compelled to fight after he feels himself vanquished.

Sir, I mean no ill-timed pleasantry, either as it regards the place, where it is uttered, the person to whom it refers, and least of all as it respects him by whom the remark is made, when I say that, in this prudent resolution of the gentleman from Augusta, he could not have been exceeded in caution and forecast by a certain renowned Captain Dugald Dalgetty himself. Sir, the war being ended, he takes service on the other side; the sceptre having passed from Judah, the gentleman stretches out his arm from Richmond to Rock Fish Gap to intercept and clutch it in its passage."[1]

On one occasion, John Randolph called the Convention "The slaughter house of reputations";[2] but his was one that passed safely through its shambles. He came to the Convention in a decidedly improved state of health, and, during its deliberations, his mind was free from all unnatural excitement. Comparing his manner in the Convention with what he had observed about him in the United States Senate, George Wythe Munford says of him: "It was calm, collected, dignified, and commanding, and his gesticulation was that of a master actor."[3]

Randolph had several tart colloquies with his associates, during the course of the Convention, but, on the whole, his deportment was severely decorous. The human instinct for just reciprocity makes it agreeable to us to record the fact that, on one occasion, he was decidedly worsted in an encounter with Chapman Johnson, who had

[1] *Debates*, 313.
[2] Little's *His. of Richmond, So. Lit. Mess.*, v. 18, 101.
[3] *The Two Parsons*, etc., p. 571.

a warm heart as well as a commanding intellect. Randolph had said that Chief Justice Marshall had put an argument on a ground which could no more be impugned by an attack made on it by Johnson than the fortress of Gibraltar could be affected by attacking it with a pocket-pistol. Replying, Johnson disclaimed any intention of holding himself out as the equal of the Chief Justice. "It needed no ghost (bowing towards Randolph) to inform the Committee of their inequality." Randolph rejoined that he had not distinctly heard the gentleman's words, but that, if they contained any ghostly advice, he was thankful for it as coming from so reverend a quarter. His hostility towards that gentleman, he said, was political only, but he must be permitted to add that there had been nothing in the gentleman's career during the present Convention to induce any man, however humble his condition, to regard him as an object of envy.

"Mr. Johnson," the reporter of the debate records, "said in reply that he had never been, he believed, an object of envy to anyone, most certainly not to the gentleman from Charlotte; for, said Mr. Johnson, we cannot envy anything while we think there is nothing superior to us."[1]

On another occasion, Alexander Campbell, too, gave a neat turn to an expression employed by Randolph. Replying to him, he said:

"I heard that same gentleman, Mr. Chairman, with pleasure too, refer to a saying of the immortal Bacon. Twice he alluded to it; twice he spoke of the great *innovator*, Time. I did wish to hear him quote the whole sentence and apply it. Lord Bacon said (I think I give it in his own words),—'*Maximus innovator tempus; quidni igitur tempus imitemur?*' Why then, says he, can we not imitate Time, the greatest of all innovators?"[2]

[1] *Debates*, 573. [2] *Id.*, 389.

Ab ovo usque ad malum (as Randolph might have said), the opposition of Randolph to any substantial changes in the existing Constitution of Virginia was obstinately, inch by inch, maintained, and, when we remember the several groups of eminent Virginia statesmen and orators, who made the history of Virginia, between the passage of the Stamp Act and the assembling of the Convention of 1829–30, an important leaf in the Book of Human Destiny, the high position, held by Virginia during this period, in the estimation of the rest of the United States and of the world, which led Randolph, on one occasion, to refer to her as "that envied commonwealth,"[1] and the grave and harassing problems imposed upon Virginia, first by the adoption of universal white suffrage, and then by the enfranchisement of the negro, who can say that, in opposing all radical amendments of the Virginia Constitution of 1776, Randolph was not something more than a mere purblind, unreasoning *laudator temporis acti ?*

Randolph's general attitude towards changes in the existing Constitution of Virginia was admirably presented, during his first speech in the Convention, in these words:

"As long as I have had any fixed opinions, I have been in the habit of considering the Constitution of Virginia, under which I have lived for more than half a century, with all its faults and failings, and with all the objections which practical men—not theorists and visionary speculators—have urged or can urge against it, as the very best Constitution; not for Japan; not for China; not for New England; or for Old England; but for this, our ancient Commonwealth of Virginia.

"But I am not such a bigot as to be unwilling, under any circumstances, however imperious, to change the Constitution under which I was born; I may say certainly, under which I was brought up, and under which I had hoped to be carried to my grave. My principles on that subject are these: the grievance must first be clearly specified, and fully proved; it

[1] *A. of C.*, 1816–17; v. 2, 333.

must be vital, or rather deadly, in its effect; its magnitude must be such as will justify prudent and reasonable men in taking the always delicate, often dangerous, step of making innovations in their fundamental law; and the remedy proposed must be reasonable and adequate to the end in view. When the grievance shall have been thus made out, I hold him to be not a loyal subject, but a political bigot, who would refuse to apply the suitable remedy.

"But I will not submit my case to a political physician; come his diploma from whence it may, who would at once prescribe all the medicines in the Pharmacopœia, not only for the disease I now have, but for all the diseases of every possible kind I ever might have in the future. These are my principles, and I am willing to carry them out; for I will not hold any principles which I may not fairly carry out in practice.

"Judge, then, with what surprise and pain, I found that not one Department of this Government—no, not one—Legislative, Executive, or Judicial—nor one branch of either—was left untouched by the spirit of *innovation* (for I cannot call it reform.) When even the Senate, yes, Sir, the Senate, which had so lately been swept by the besom of innovation—even the Senate had not gone untouched or unscathed. Many innovations are proposed to be made, without any one practical grievance having been even suggested, much less shown."[1]

Later on, in the same speech, he said: "Mr. Chairman, the wisest thing this body could do would be to return to the people from whom they came *re infecta*."[2]

In a subsequent speech, Randolph's prejudice against excessive legislation was expressed with equal force. His remarks are thus reported:

"Mr. Randolph said he should vote against the amendment, and that, on a principle, which he had learned before he came into public life; and by which he had been governed during the whole course of that life, that it was always unwise—yes—

[1] *Debates*, 313. [2] *Id.*, 320.

highly unwise, to disturb a thing that was at rest. This was a great cardinal principle that should govern all wise statesmen —never without the strongest necessity to disturb that which was at rest. He should vote against the amendment on another and an inferior consideration. Whatever opinion might have been expressed as to a multitude of counsellors, there was but one among considerate men as to a multiplicity of laws. The objection, urged by the gentleman from Richmond over the way (Mr. Nicholas) to the existing clause, was precisely one of the strongest motives with him for preferring the amendment. I am much opposed, said Mr. Randolph, except in a great emergency—and then the Legislative machine is always sure to work with sufficient rapidity—the steam is then up—I am much opposed to this 'dispatch of business.' The principles of free Government in this country, (and if they fail—if they should be cast away—here—they are lost forever, I fear, to the world) have more to fear from over legislation than from any other cause. Yes, Sir—they have more to fear from armies of Legislators and armies of Judges than from any other, or from all other, causes. Besides the great manufactory at Washington, we have twenty-four laboratories more at work; all making laws. In Virginia, we have now two in operation, one engaged in ordinary legislation, and another *hammering* at the fundamental law. Among all these lawyers, Judges, and Legislators, there is a great oppression on the people, who are neither lawyers, Judges, nor Legislators, nor ever expect to be—an oppression barely more tolerable than any which is felt under the European Governments. Sir, I never can forget that, in the great and good book, to which I look for all truth and all wisdom, the book of Kings succeeds the book of Judges."[1] (*a*)

But at no time, during the course of the Convention, was Randolph's hostility to radical amendments of the existing Constitution of Virginia more eloquently voiced than in these words, which were drawn from him by a proposition to insert in the new Constitution provisions for its future amendment:

[1] *Debates*, 802.

"I shall vote against this resolution; and I will state as succinctly as I can my reasons for doing so. I believe that they will, in substance, be found in a very old book, and conveyed in these words, 'Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.' Sir, I have remarked since the commencement of our deliberations—and with no small surprise—a very great anxiety to provide for *futurity*. Gentlemen, for example, are not content with any present discussion of the Constitution, unless we will consent to prescribe for all time hereafter. I had always thought him the most skilful physician, who, when called to a patient, relieved him of the existing malady, without undertaking to prescribe for such as he might by possibility endure thereafter.

"Sir, what is the amount of this provision? It is either mischievous, or it is nugatory. I do not know a greater calamity that can happen to any nation than having the foundations of its Government unsettled.

"Dr. Franklin, who, in shrewdness, especially in all that related to domestic life, was never excelled, used to say that two movings were equal to one fire. So to any people two Constitutions are worse than a fire. And gentlemen, as if they were afraid that this besetting sin of Republican Governments, this *rerum novarum lubido* (to use a very homely phrase, but one that comes pat to the purpose) this *maggot* of innovation, would cease to bite, are here gravely making provision that this Constitution, which we should consider as a remedy for all the ills of the body politic, may itself be amended or modified at any future time. Sir, I am against any such provision. I should as soon think of introducing into a marriage contract a provision for divorce; and thus poisoning the greatest blessing of mankind at its very source—at its fountain head. He has seen little and has reflected less who does not know that 'necessity' is the great, powerful, governing principle of affairs here. Sir, I am not going into that question which puzzled Pandemonium, the question of liberty and necessity.

"Free will, fix'd fate, foreknowledge absolute'; but I do contend that necessity is one principal instrument of all the good that man enjoys.

"The happiness of the connubial union itself depends greatly on necessity; and, when you touch this, you touch the arch, the keystone of the arch, on which the happiness and well-being of society is founded.

"Look at the relation of master and slave (that opprobrium in the opinion of some gentlemen to all civilized society and all free Government). Sir, there are few situations in life where friendships so strong and so lasting are formed as in that very relation. The slave knows that he is bound indissolubly to his master, and must from necessity remain always under his control. The master knows that he is bound to maintain and provide for his slave so long as he retains him in his possession. And each party accommodates himself to his situation. I have seen the dissolution of many friendships, such, at least, as were so called; but I have seen that of master and slave endure so long as there remained a drop of the blood of the master to which the slave could cleave. Where is the necessity of this provision in the Constitution? Where is the use of it? Sir, what are we about? Have we not been undoing what the wiser heads—I must be permitted to say so—yes, Sir, what the wiser heads of our ancestors did more than half a century ago? Can anyone believe that we, by any amendments of ours—by any of our scribbling on that parchment—by any amulet—any legerdemain—charm—abracadabra—of ours, can prevent our sons from doing the same thing? that is from doing as they please, just as we are doing as we please? It is impossible. Who can bind posterity? When I hear gentlemen talk of making a Constitution 'for all time,' and introducing provisions into it 'for all time,' and yet see men here that are older than the Constitution we are about to destroy (I am older myself than the present Constitution; it was established when I was a boy), it reminds me of the truces and the peaces in Europe. They always begin: 'In the name of the most Holy and Undivided Trinity,' and go on to declare, 'There shall be perfect and perpetual peace and unity between the subjects of such and such potentates, for all time to come,' and, in less than seven years, they are at war again.

"Sir, I am not a prophet or a seer; but I will venture to predict that your new Constitution, if it shall be adopted, does not last

twenty years. And so confident am I in this opinion that, if it were a proper subject for betting, and I was a sporting character, I believe I would *take ten* against it.

"It would seem as if we were endeavouring (God forbid that I should insinuate that such was the intention of any here)—as if we were endeavouring to corrupt the people at the fountain-head. Sir, the great opprobrium of popular Government is its *instability*. It was this which made the people of our Anglo-Saxon stock cling with such pertinacity to an independent Judiciary, as the only means they could find to resist this vice of popular Governments. By such a provision as this, we are now inviting, and in a manner prompting, the people to be dissatisfied with their Government. Sir, there is no need of this. Dissatisfaction will come soon enough. I foretell now, and with a confidence surpassed by none I ever felt on any occasion, that those, who have been the most anxious to destroy the Constitution of Virginia, and to substitute in its place this *thing*, will be so dissatisfied now with the result of our labours that this new Constitution will very shortly be opposed by all the People of the State. I speak not at random. I have high authority for what I say now in my eye. Though it was said that the people called for a new state of things, yet the gentlemen from Brooke himself (Mr. Doddridge) who came into the Legislative Committee, armed with an axe to lay at the root of the tree, told the Convention that he would sooner go home, and live under the old Constitution than adopt some of the provisions which have received the sanction of this body. But I am wandering from the point.

"Sir, I see no wisdom in making this provision for future changes. You must give Governments time to operate on the people, and give the people time to become gradually assimilated to their institutions. Almost any thing is better than this state of perpetual uncertainty. A people may have the best form of Government that the wit of man ever devised; and yet, from its uncertainty alone, may, in effect, live under the worst Government in the world. Sir, how often must I repeat that *change* is not *reform*. I am willing that this new Constitution shall stand as long as it is possible for it to stand, and that, believe me, is a very short time. Sir, it is vain to

deny it. They may say what they please about the old Constitution—the defect is not there. It is not in the form of the old edifice, neither in the design nor the elevation: it is in the *material*—it is in the People of Virginia To my knowledge, that people are changed from what they have been. The four hundred men who went out to David were *in debt.* The partizans of Cæsar were *in debt.* The fellow-labourers of Cataline were *in debt.* And I defy you to shew me a desperately indebted people anywhere who can bear a regular, sober Government. I throw the challenge to all who hear me. I say that the character of the good old Virginia planter—the man who owned from five to twenty slaves, or less, who lived by hard work, and who paid his debts—is passed away. A new order of things is come. The period has arrived of living by one's wits, of living by contracting debts that one cannot pay, and, above all, of living by office-hunting. Sir, what do we see? Bankrupts—branded bankrupts—giving great dinners—sending their children to the most expensive schools—giving grand parties—and just as well received as anybody else in society. I say that in such a state of things the old Constitution was too good for them; they could not bear it. No, Sir, they could not bear a freehold suffrage, and a property representation. I have always endeavoured to do the people justice; but I will not flatter them; I will not pander to their appetite for change. I will do nothing to provide for change. I will not agree to any rule of future apportionment, or to any provision for future changes, called amendments to the Constitution. They who love change, who delight in public confusion, who wish to feed the cauldron and make it bubble, may vote, if they please, for future changes. But by what spell, by what formula are you going to bind the people to all future time? *Quis custodiet custodes?* The days of Lycurgus are gone by, when he could swear the people not to alter the Constitution until he should return—*animo non revertendi.* You may make what entries upon parchment you please. Give me a Constitution that will last for half a century; that is all I wish for. No Constitution that you can make will last the one-half of half a century. Sir, I will stake anything short of my salvation that those, who are malcontent now, will be

more malcontent three years hence than they are at this day. I have no favour for this Constitution. I shall vote against its adoption, and I shall advise all the people of my district to set their faces—aye—and their shoulders against it. But, if we are to have it, let us not have it with its death warrant in its very face; with the *facies hypocratica*—the sardonic grin of death—upon its countenance."[1]

In the Debates of the Convention can be found, too, a good example of the contagious pleasantry with which Randolph could tell an apt story.

"Sir," he said, "our discussions here have brought to my recollection that beautiful apologue, or fable, of Addison's, where he represents the whole human race as summoned by Jupiter into one assembly. The God listens to their various complaints, and then gives permission to each to lay down his own grievance, and take up any that he chose to select among those deposited by his neighbours. A very handsome, well-made man lays down a disease under which he labours, and takes up the deformity which a hump-backed man had thrown off; a mother brings her undutiful son; a wife her bad husband. A husband comes with his shrew of a wife, and selects another partner, who, as he believes, will suit him better. All were anxious to make the change; for it is human nature, Sir, to view all the miseries of others as very easy to be endured; yes, Sir, nothing is so easy as to endure other people's evils unless it be to spend other people's money. The assembly broke up well-pleased, and each returned to his home to try his altered situation. But, Sir, what was the issue? In a little time, they all came back again. The once handsome man came to be set free from his hump; the diseased man to take it back again. The lady brought her new husband, and the man, who had before brought his shrew of a wife, came back to seek her again: declaring that long habit and intimacy had so cemented their union that the *old woman* was the best companion after all.

(Here loud laughter was heard in the gallery, and the Chair

[1] *Debates*, 789-791.

repeatedly called to order). Sir, I mean no pleasantry on such a subject: but what I mean is this; that there is not now a malcontent in the Commonwealth, who, after this new Constitution shall have been adopted, will not in six months more be just as much dissatisfied and more than he is now."[1]

Mrs. William Winston Seaton tells us that, on one occasion, when a throng of women were assembled in the hall of the House of Representatives to hear a debate, Randolph, addressing the Speaker, exclaimed impatiently: "Sir, they had much better be at home attending to their knitting."[2] The same old-fashioned sense of fitness impelled him to make some remarks in the convention on a proviso, which excluded clergymen from the Legislature, that must have rendered his associate, the Rev. Alexander Campbell, decidedly uncomfortable. They were these:

"To me this is a most unlooked-for proposition. There is not one single article of my political creed, about which I have not a greater disposition to doubt, than the propriety of excluding a class of men, dedicated to the office of religion, from the possession of political power. A gentleman told us that but for the insertion of that proviso in the Constitution he should be for excluding them from the Legislature. I would much rather vote to strike out the whole, and to leave the Constitution as it now stands; and for this plain reason: I am, and have been, and ever shall be, a practical man; and, when I meet with legislative provisions of this kind, I rather smile at the fears which dictated them than applaud the caution they exhibit. The Constitution is just as safe without, as with, them. The Legislature of Virginia cannot, and, if it could, it dare not, attempt such legislation as is forbidden in the body of this resolution. I feel myself perfectly safe. I find somewhere else a provision that we shall have no orders of nobility in this country. Who dreams that we ever can? Sir, when the time

[1] *Debates*, 492, 493.

[2] Letter dated Mar. 28, 1820, in *A Biographical Sketch of William Winston Seaton*, 150.

shall come that the People of this country are ripe for a union of Church and State, or for orders of nobility either, they will have them in spite of all the moth-eaten parchment in your archives. I fearlessly pronounce that the admission of gentlemen of the cloth into your Legislative Halls is *ipso facto* the union of Church and State. Sir, are there no other considerations which weigh with us in altering or in keeping the Constitution as it is? They are now excluded. Are there no other considerations? None that every well-regulated mind belonging to the clerical profession ought of itself to suggest? I have had the pleasure (I was about to say I have had the honor, but the term would be misplaced) to be acquainted with many of them: with men of the most unaffected piety, of high attainments and great talents; and who, moreover, were clothed with that *humility* which is the Alpha and Omega of the Christian character, yes, Sir, its all in all; and I never knew one of them who dared to trust himself in such a situation. Not one, who, if such an offer had been made him, might not justly have said, 'Lead us not into temptation.' Sir, what are the offices of the clerical body? Do they not mingle with all classes of society? and, above all, in the domestic circle? Is not their influence there paramount to that of all others? Is it not their duty to serve a master whose kingdom is not of this world? As well to reprove as to console?

"Figure to yourself, Sir, a minister of the gospel of peace about to reprove for his sins a man of wealth and influence in his county; having, at the same time, a desire himself to represent that county? Sir, this is no exclusion on account of the profession of any opinions. It is an exclusion of an occupation; of an occupation incompatible with the discharge of the duties of a member of either branch of the Legislature. The task of legislation is at war with the duties of the pastor. The two are utterly incompatible. Sir, no man can busy himself in electioneering (and in these times who can be elected without it?), no man can mingle in Legislative cabals; I say no man can touch that pitch without being defiled. No man can so employ himself without being disqualified for those sacred duties which every minister of the gospel takes upon himself; and for which he is accountable, not to his constituents

at home, but to the God who made him; and who will call him to a much more rigorous account than that he renders to his parishioners.

"Sir, there is an indecency in this thing. We have heard much about exclusion of the ladies; but there is not greater indecency and incompatibility in a woman's thrusting herself into a political assembly and all its cabals than in a clergyman's undertaking the same thing. One of the greatest masters of the human heart, and of political philosophy too, declares that, while the French are in their manners more deferential to woman than any other people, they have less real esteem for woman than any other nation on earth.

"Let me illustrate this. The Turk shews that he values his wife by locking her up; it is to be sure a mistaken mode: but he shews that he estimates the value of the treasure by putting it under lock and key. The Frenchman permits his wife to mingle in political affairs; and, if Madame Roland had not been engaged in such affairs, Madame Roland would never have ascended the scaffold. If women will unsex themselves, and, if priests—what shall I say?—will degrade themselves by mingling in scenes and in affairs for which their function renders them improper and unfit, they must take the consequences. If ladies will plunge into the affairs of men, they will lose the deference they now enjoy; they will be treated roughly like men. Just so it is with priests. They lose all the deference which belongs, and which is paid, to their office (whether they merit it or no).

"Sir, rely upon it, if you permit priests to be made members of the Legislature, they will soon constitute a large portion of all your assemblies. And it has been truly said that no countries are so ill-governed as those which are ruled by the counsels of women except such as have been governed by the counsels of priests."[1]

The Convention came to an end on Jan. 15, 1830. Before it was adjourned *sine die*, Randolph was put forward to acknowledge on its behalf its sense of obligation to Philip P. Barbour for the manner in which he had presided

[1] *Debates*, 458–459.

over its deliberations after the retirement of Monroe. On occasions of this kind, Randolph was always peculiarly happy, and on this particular one his knack did not fail him. He said:

"Mr. Chairman,—For the last time, I throw myself upon the indulgence and courtesy of this body. I have a proposition to submit, which I flatter myself, which I trust, I believe, will be received not only with greater unanimity than any other which has been offered in the course of our past discussions but with perfect unanimity. You will perceive, Sir, that I allude to your eminent colleague who has presided over our deliberations. When I shall have heard him pronounce from that Chair the words, 'This Convention stands adjourned *sine die*,' I shall be ready to sing my political *nunc dimittis;* for it will have put a period to three months, the most anxious and painful of a political life, neither short nor uneventful. Having said thus much, I hope I may be permitted to add that, notwithstanding any occasional heat excited by the collision of debate, I part from every member here with the most hearty good will towards all. But I cannot consent that we shall separate without offering the tribute of my approbation and inviting the House to add theirs, infinitely more valuable, to the conduct of the Presiding officer of this Assembly. If this were a suitable occasion, I might embrace within the scope of my motion and of my remarks his public conduct and character elsewhere, with which I have been long and intimately acquainted; but this, as it would be misplaced, so would it be fulsome. I shall, therefore, restrict myself to the following motion:

"'Resolved, that the impartiality and dignity, with which Philip P. Barbour, Esq., hath presided over the deliberations of this House, and the distinguished ability, whereby he hath facilitated the dispatch of business, receive the best thanks of the Convention.'"[1]

There can be no doubt that, if the East had a paramount leader in the Convention, that leader was Randolph; and

[1] *Debates*, 894.

we say this with a full appreciation of the rich stores of knowledge and glowing declamation which Benjamin Watkins Leigh lavished upon the discussions of the Convention and the splendid contributions made by other champions of the East to them.

"No man," Hugh R. Pleasants tells us, "who watched the proceedings of that Convention could fail to observe the very extraordinary influence which Mr. Randolph exercised over *all* its members, friends as well as foes, though in very opposite directions. The greatest men in the whole State, men whose names were spread as widely as the limits of the Union, men who would have been distinguished in any assembly of the world, were members of that Convention. To say that Mr. Randolph controlled a large majority of those, who composed his own party, as absolutely as the moon regulates the motions of the tide, were to use a figure scarcely too bold for the occasion. The boldest and most impassioned speakers in the loftiest flights of their oratory turned their eyes to watch his approving nod, and seemed to catch inspiration from his recognition. He was like the musical director in the midst of an immense orchestra; the players and the instruments seemed to obey the slightest motion of his hand."[1]

When Richard Morris, of Hanover County, a *tertium quid*, who, had he lived longer, might have left a truly illustrious name in the history of Virginia behind him, concluded his striking speech on the basis of representation, Randolph gracefully observed: "I see that the wise men still come from the East."[2] And when Abel P. Upshur and Thomas R. Joynes, of Accomac County, had delivered their speeches on the basis of representation, one a masterpiece of stately and luminous oratory, and the other of the turn of mind, which is said to distill the refined spirit of instruction from figures, Randolph referred to them respectively

[1] *So. Lit. Mess.*, v. 17, 303.
[2] *The Va. Convention 1819–30*, by Grigsby, 67.

as "that figure of rhetoric" and "that figure of arithmetic."[1]

Indeed, in some respects, Randolph never appeared to greater advantage than he did in the Convention. In reply to one of the many letters of congratulation which he received after its adjournment, he said:

"How I have succeeded in gaining upon the good opinion of the public, as you and others of my friends tell me I have done, I cannot tell. I made no effort for it; nor did it enter into my imagination to court any man or party in or out of the Convention. It is most gratifying nevertheless to be told by yourself and others, in whose sincerity and truth I place the most unbounded reliance, that I have, by the part I took in the Convention, advanced myself in the estimation of my country. With politics I am now done; and it is well to be able to *quit winner*."[2]

[1] *Seven Decades of the Union*, by H. A. Wise, 200.
[2] Garland, v. 2, 332.

CHAPTER XIV

Mission to Russia

Before the Convention met, Randolph had received the offer of a foreign mission from President Jackson, who entertained a partiality for him; mainly, perhaps, because of the fearless spirit so closely akin to his own, and the searching talents which had done so much to bring the administration of Adams to the block; but not a little, too, doubtless, because of the antagonism which Randolph had always sustained to Jackson's *bête noir*—Henry Clay.

The office tendered to Randolph was that of Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to Russia, and in the letter by which it was tendered the President said:

"The great and rapidly increasing influence of Russia in the affairs of the world renders it very important that our representative at that Court should be of the highest respectability; and the expediency of such a course at the present moment is greatly increased by circumstances of a special character. Among the number of our statesmen, from whom the selection might, with propriety, be made, I do not know of one better fitted for the station on the score of talents and experience in public affairs, or possessing stronger claims upon the favorable consideration of *his* country than yourself. Thus impressed, and entertaining a deep and grateful sense of your long and unceasing devotion to sound principles and the interest of the people, I feel it a duty to offer the appointment to you."[1]

[1] *Id.*, v. 2, 333.

The offer of the Mission was attended besides by a cordial expression of personal respect and esteem on the part of the President, and, in his reply accepting it, Randolph said:

"May I be pardoned for saying that the manner, in which it [the tender] has been conveyed, could alone have overcome the reluctance that I feel at the thoughts of leaving private life and again embarking on the stormy sea of Federal Politics." And then he added:

"This I hope I may do without any impeachment of my patriotism, since it shall in no wise diminish my exertions to serve our country in the station to which I have been called by her Chief Magistrate, and under those 'circumstances of a special character' indicated by your letter."[1] (*a*)

When the appointment was communicated to the Senate, after the adjournment of the Virginia Convention, it was called up by John Tyler, and was *unanimously* confirmed[2]; which would hardly seem to be consistent with the statement made by Henry Adams in his *John Randolph* that President Jackson offered the mission to Randolph "amid the jeers of the entire country."[3] Indeed, the assent of the opposition was given with some degree of *empressement*. Several of its members called for the question as soon as Tyler sat down; the voices of Josiah S. Johnston, of Louisiana, and Daniel Webster being especially audible.

Before leaving the United States for Russia, Randolph wrote to Jackson, saying: "In case that I shall be so fortunate as to 'carry into effect the object of my mission in season for your annual message,' shall I be deemed too encroaching, if I ask leave to spend the winter in the South of Europe, provided I see no prospect that the public interest may suffer thereby?"[4] Endorsed on this letter, which is now in the possession of the Library of Congress,

[1] Garland, v. 2, 333.
[2] *Life of Jas. Buchanan*, by Curtis, v. 1, 128 (note).
[3] P., 302.
[4] June 8, 1830, *Jackson Papers*, v. 75, Libr. Cong.

is this pencilled instruction by Jackson: "Let the request be granted. Well aware that he will be always at his post when duty calls. A. J."

The first official act of Randolph was to appoint John Randolph Clay Secretary of the Legation at St. Petersburg.

The voyage to Russia he made in the United States man-of-war *Concord*, Captain Matthew C. Perry, who afterwards opened up Japan to intercourse with the Occident, taking with him three of his slaves—John, Juba, and Eboe—and also a lot of wine and books, and some firearms, and, whimsically enough in the light of modern conditions, some bags of hams, a barrel of bread, and a coffee-pot and mill.[1]

Before the *Concord* sailed from Norfolk, Va., a banquet was given to Randolph in that City on Saturday, June 26, 1830.[2] The toasts, offered on this occasion, re-animate the political issues of the time for us as nothing else could do. One was to "the Sovereignty of the States, the Keystone of the Union"; another was "to Virginia," attended by the proud vaunt that she would neither ask nor receive the largesses of the General Government; and another read to "Our guest, John Randolph of Roanoke, identified during his whole political career with the sturdy maxims and honest doctrines of Republicanism. *As Republicans*, we tender him the most acceptable homage by adhering to his principles." This last toast was drunk standing, and bears additional testimony to the impression which the people of Virginia have always entertained that Randolph was the most unwaveringly consistent of all their public men of his era. In reply to this toast, Randolph delivered a brief address, which, so far as we can judge from the imperfect report that has come down to us, was a pointed and apt one. After being toasted, he requited the kindness of his hosts by offering a number of

[1] List of Return Pk'ges shipped by J. R., Libr. Cong.

[2] J. R.'s Journal, Va. Hist. Soc.

toasts himself. Two were highly characteristic, in the light of his violent hostility to internal improvements by the Federal Government and to the tariff, namely: "The rejection of the Maysville Road Bill (an internal improvement bill vetoed by Jackson); it falls upon the ear like the music of other days," and "The Tariff, 'a piece of tesselated mosaic without cement.' Let domestic industry be protected but not with that partial protection which filches the earnings of millions to lavish bounties on the few." Better still was the following: "The two modern discoveries—the Non-Intercourse Act, buying without selling; and the Tariff Act, selling without buying; in other words, husbands without wives, and wives without husbands."[1] Indeed, Randolph, death's-head as he was, seems to have been the liveliest individual at the feast. Not content with offering numerous toasts himself, he suggested felicitous amendments to several offered by others. When John S. Millson offered the toast: "The ultimate operation of the 'American System,' seeming splendor and actual want—Midas starving on his golden banquet," Randolph promptly gave additional point to it by suggesting the insertion immediately after the word "Midas" of the words "with his ass' ears." And so, when T. G. Broughton offered the toast: "John Randolph, however we may sometimes differ from him, we cannot say that he ever gave a vote to impose a burthen on the people," the words "or to abridge their liberties" were added at Randolph's rather self-complacent request. But, when a toast was offered by W. E. Cunningham in the words: "The birthday of Thomas Jefferson; may its anniversary celebrations *aid* in bringing back the government to the principles of 98," the old prejudice asserted its force, and Randolph remarked dryly: "It will require stronger physic to do that."[2] (*a*)

[1] *Niles' Reg.*, July 10, 1830, v. 2 (4th Series), p. 359–360.
[2] *Niles' Reg.*, v. 2 (4th series), 359.

The voyage to Russia was entirely uneventful except that Randolph had some little friction with the Captain of the *Concord*, arising out of the fact that the former claimed that the ship had been placed under his control as Minister[1]; a claim that, for the sake of all on board, including Randolph himself, Captain Perry might very well have been slow to concede.

The *Concord* left Norfolk on June 28, 1830, and Randolph landed at St. Petersburg on August 10, 1830.[2] Shortly after his arrival there, he was presented at Court. This presentation, as well as much else connected with his mission, has been the subject of the grossest misrepresentation. One absurd rumor represented Randolph, who had moved in the very best society of his own country and England, and was always much of a stickler for good form in everything, as addressing the Czar of all the Russias at the presentation in these words: "How are you Emperor? How is madam?"; meaning the Empress.[3] Equally untrustworthy is what Henry Adams says in regard to the bearing of Randolph at Court:

"He was impressed by the atmosphere of a court and plumped down on his knees before the Empress of Russia, who was greatly amused, as well she might be, at his eccentric ideas of Republican etiquette. Curiously enough, an American woman, no less a person than the famous Mrs. Patterson Bonaparte, was in the palace at the time, and, to her dying day, told how the ladies in attendance on the Empress, coming directly from the audience, laughed in describing his behavior."[4]

Just what written evidence, if any, there is of this oral narration by Madame Bonaparte, we have been unable to ascertain. If there is any, as we suppose there must be, we

[1] J. R. to Martin Van Buren, *Concord* off Copenhagen, Aug. 3, 1830, *Van Buren Papers*, Libr. Cong.

[2] MS. Journal, Va. Hist. Soc.

[3] *Harpers Mag.*, v. 5, 533. [4] P. 302.

should like to see it; since it has escaped our research. But we do know that the various acts of extravagant behavior, which were imputed to Randolph, in connection with his presentation, were flatly contradicted in a letter to the *Richmond Enquirer*, dated Jan. 17, 1831, by John Randolph Clay, who was certainly in a position to know all about them if they had had any actual existence. In this letter, he denied that Randolph had conducted himself in a ridiculous manner before the Emperor, and further said: "Mr. Randolph's conduct on all occasions was that of a perfect gentleman."[1] (*a*) In his *Recollections of Randolph*, Jacob Harvey also tells us that, in a conversation which he had with Randolph, after the return of the latter from the Russian Mission, Randolph "declared solemnly that he had *not* gone down on his knee to the Empress, as was stated in the newspapers."[2] The origin of the falsehood was explained to Washington Irving in London by Randolph shortly after the audience; and it is a very good illustration of how a whispered molehill becomes a trumpeted mountain in the province of human gossip and slander.

"He," Irving wrote to his brother, "gave me a very minute account of his presentation to the Emperor and Empress, with each of whom he had long conversations, and I believe made the Empress laugh at least as much by the point of his conversation as by any peculiarity of manner. The story of his kneeling to the Emperor must have arisen from what he relates himself; that, in advancing, as one of his legs is contracted, and somewhat shorter than the other, he limped with it in such a manner that he supposes the Emperor thought he was about to bend one knee, as he made a movement as if to prevent such a thing and said: 'No! No!' Randolph, however, is too well informed on points of etiquette and too lofty a fellow to have made such a blunder. I have no doubt,

[1] Clay MSS., Libr. Cong.
[2] *The New Mirror*, v. 2, 85.

however, that he has left behind him the character of a rare bird."[1]

An excellent and just summary of the whole matter!

Babble, it will be observed, was not even certain as to whether it was the Empress or the Emperor before whom the genuflexion had been made. But why did not Henry Adams mention the fact that, on March 2, 1831, Washington Irving wrote a letter from London, which was published first in the *New York Evening Post*, and afterwards in the *Richmond Enquirer*, in which he stated that Prince Lieven, who was the Russian Prime Minister, when Randolph was presented, had recently told him that the report that Randolph had been guilty of an absurd and undignified act of homage in the presence of the Emperor was entirely destitute of truth?[2]

Other stories, put into circulation about Randolph, when he was at St. Petersburg, that he had been rude to Prince Lieven, that he had violated diplomatic usages, that he had become involved in an unseemly strife with various persons, that he had been presented at Court in a fantastic dress, and the like, were traversed by him in a letter written to Dr. Brockenbrough from London on Dec. 18, 1830:

"The yearnings of my heart after home have been stifled by the monstrous and malignant calumnies which have been heaped upon my unoffending head. To them I have but to oppose the honor of a gentleman, upon which I declare them to be utterly false and groundless. My official correspondence will flatly contradict the most mischievous of them, as regards the public interest. Nothing could be more cordial than my reception in Russia. It was but yesterday (Dec. 19, 1830) that I had my first interview with Prince Lieven since his return to this Court, and my reception was like that of a brother.

[1] Letter to Peter Irving, Oct. 22, 1830, *Life, &c.*, by Irving, v. 2, 439.
[2] *Richm. Enq.*, May 3, 1831.

"On my arrival at St. Petersburg, I took up my abode at the principal hotel, Demouth's, where I staid one week.

"Furnishing myself with a handsome equipage and four or five horses, I called promptly on every diplomatic character, whether Ambassador, Envoy, or Chargé, or even Secretary of Legation, from the highest to the lowest. Not content with sending round my carriage and servants, I called in person and left my cards.

"Count Athalin, the new representative of France, promptly called on me (being a later comer), and the next day, being ill-abed, I sent my coach and Secretary of Legation to return his visit. I had previously called on the *Chargé d'Affaires* of France under Charles X.

"I had not, during my sojourn in St. Petersburg, the slightest difference with any one except a British subject, and that was on the construction of a contract. This man (my landlord) and his niece were my fellow-passengers from Cronstadt; and we parted on the most civil and friendly terms.

"He is not the author of these slanders.

"Before I thought of cancelling the bargain with Smith, I had applied to Mrs. Wilson [an Englishwoman] to receive and nurse my poor Juba. I removed to her house myself, not as a boarder, but a lodger, and took a room on the *ground floor*. Except Clay and Capt. Turner, of the ship *Fama of Boston*, to whom I intrusted my faithful Juba, I did not set eyes upon one of the inmates of the house. Capt. T. at my request was often in my apartment, and to him I fearlessly appeal for the falsehood of these calumnies, so far as I came under his observation. They are utterly false.

" 'The Court Tailor.' A day or two after I got to Demouth's Hotel, a person very unceremoniously opened my parlor door and advanced to my bedroom, where I was lying on a sofa. He was the *American Consul's Tailor*, and said, 'He had been sent for,' but seemed abashed at finding the Consul with me. I, seeing through the trick (it is universally practised there), told him he had been misinformed, and the man apologized and withdrew. He was sent for about ten days afterwards, and made some clothes for Mr. Clay.

"I did not refuse to land at Cronstadt. The authorities came

on board to visit me, and, when they returned, I entered the steamboat and proceeded up to St. Petersburg.

"My dress, on presentation to their Imperial Majesties, was a full suit of the finest black cloth that London could afford; and, with the exception of a steel-cap sword, was the dress of Mr. Madison during the late Convention. (I had, indeed, no diamond buckles.) In the same dress, never worn except upon those two occasions (with the exceptions of gold shoe and knee buckles, adopted out of pity to Mr. McLane, and laying aside, at his instance, the sword), I was presented at court here. On neither occasion, did I think of my costume after I had put it on; nor did it attract observation; and I am well satisfied that the love of display on the part of some of our own foreign agents and the pruriency of female frontlets for coronets and tiaras have been at the bottom of our *court-dress abroad*. It is not expected or desired that a foreign minister shall have exacted from him what is the duty of a subject. I saw Prince Talleyrand at the King's levee as plainly dressed as I was. But what satisfies me on the subject is that Prince Lieven, on whose goodness I threw myself for instruction at St. Petersburg, and who saw me in the dress (chosen by Polonius's advice), never hinted anything on the subject; but truly said that 'His Majesty, the Emperor, would receive me as one gentleman receives another'; and such was the fact."[1]

An interesting supplement to this letter has been furnished us by Garland, who lived near enough to Randolph's time to secure much valuable oral, as well as written, material for his biography:

"Mr. Randolph afterwards described this interview to some of his friends. He said he went to the Palace, passed through a number of guards and officers splendidly dressed, and was introduced to the Emperor alone. He was a handsome young man, dressed in uniform. But a difficulty arose from Mr. Randolph's speaking French imperfectly, and the Emperor not speaking English. The Emperor sent for some one that could interpret for them; but, after a little time, they managed to

[1] Garland, v. 2, 339.

understand each other; Mr. Randolph speaking French very slowly and the Emperor answering in the same manner. At length, the Emperor asked him if he wished to see the Empress. Mr. Randolph replied that he did. The Emperor then bowed, and Mr. Randolph bowed himself out of the presence backwards, according to the etiquette of the court. He was then conducted to another part of the Palace, and introduced among a large assemblage of ladies, where he was presented to the Empress, she being in advance of the rest. He described her as being very handsome. She questioned him whether he had ever been at court before. He said he had not; that it was the first time he had ever been in the presence of royalty. She asked him if he knew Mr. Monroe, who had been aide-de-camp to Prince Constantine, and afterwards to the Emperor. He said he did not. She said he was a very fine young man, and a great favorite with the Emperor; and asked if he was not the son of the Postmaster-General. He replied that he was not; but was the son of the Postmaster at Washington. She asked him if he was not a relation of President Monroe. He told her he was not. After some further conversation, Mr. Randolph said something which made the Empress laugh 'most vociferously.' The audience soon ended, and Mr. Randolph had again to bow himself out backwards; 'and it was lucky,' said he, 'that I happened to be near the door.'"[1]

There are two letters from the hand of Randolph, in which he imparts to us the impressions left upon his mind by St. Petersburg. One is a letter to his friend Nathan Loughborough, which, so far as we are aware, has never been published, and the other is a letter to Dr. Brockenbrough which has been preserved for us by Garland. This is the letter to Loughborough in part:

ST. PETERSBURG, August 18, 1830.

"MY GOOD FRIEND:

You might know by the date (as regards the month) that I was in the only realm in Christendom, where the new style is not yet introduced. Much to my disappointment, your old

[1] Garland, v. 2, 341.

friend, Mr. Lewis, is not here. He is & has been for sometime in England. I therefore sent your letter to his Compting House as the most ready mode of getting it to his hands.

"I have a deal to tell you which I must absolutely put off to another time; for I am hardly able to get my dispatches ready for the ship.

"Everything here is new—strange, *outré*, as the French say; some things in the way of 'the shabby genteel' that put me in mind of a certain great city, that you wot of. But the splendour surpasses anything that I have seen at Paris or London.

"The approach to this capital is most imposing. We saw ten times as many merchant ships in the gulf of Finland as I have seen in the Irish & English channels & the Thames & in the North Sea in four voyages that I have made to England, and three thence to the U. S. We also saw a Russian Fleet of 20 odd sail, bound to the Baltic for exercise. Cronstadt is a most formidable fortress—it is also a great naval depot and dockyard. Our reception was most flattering—they readily gave us gun for gun. Not so surly John Bull. To say the truth, the more I see and know the English the less I like them. The Governor and the Comr. of the Port with their respective suites waited upon 'His Excellency'—'pah! an ounce of civet, good apothecary.' They were each to me one of the most interesting objects in the world, a man grown gray in arms without ferocity; neither of them degraded by intemperance; too often the closing scene of the old soldier's life.

"Mr. Roshnoff, the Governor, is a fine, silver-haired, meek, mild-looking Uncle Toby of a veteran who seemed not to have the heart to hurt a fly. Yet do not take me for such a greenhorn as to believe that I am absolutely a physiognomist or at all a phrenologist. Some very demure people that I have known—even of the softer sex . . .

"M. Vasilieff, the commander of the Port, is a square bluff-built old soldier who looks weather, and almost bullet, proof; and one might credit of him what we hear of Suvarov for hardihood. They are a couple of hearty old cocks, and, our Captain's wine being none of the best, I pressed upon them some fine old Cercial and some brown stout that had crossed the

Atlantic twice; to say nothing of the Baltic and North seas. They declared by more than words (by eyes and a certain complacent play of the muscles about the mouth) that they had never tasted such beer or wine. (If you get ill-spelled letters from me don't be surprised. I am writing each moment two languages, and speaking two and a half.) . . .

"If God spares me I shall be a candidate next election for Congress.

. . . . . .

"St. Petersburg is 26 miles above Cronstadt. Nothing, drawing more than 8 or 10 feet, can come up. In that respect, it resembles Baltimore. In others Amsterdam—a morass."

The letter to Dr. Brockenbrough, to which we have referred, is dated Sept. 4, 1830:

"My reception has been all that the most fastidious could wish. You know I always dreaded the *summer* climate, when my friends were killing me with the climate of Russia before my time. Nothing can be more detestable. It is a comet; and when I arrived it was in perihelion. I shall not stay out the aphelion. Heat, dust, impalpable, pervading every part and pore, and actually sealing these last up, annoying the eyes especially, which are further distressed by the glare of the white houses; insects of all nauseous descriptions, bugs, fleas, mosquitos, flies innumerable, gigantic as the empire they inhabit; who will take no denial. Under cover of the spectacles, they do not suffer you to write two words without a conflict with them. This is the land of Pharaoh and his plagues; Egypt and its ophthalmia and vermin without its fertility; Holland without its wealth, improvements, or cleanliness. Nevertheless, it is, beyond all comparison, the most magnificent city I ever beheld. But you must not reckon upon being laid in earth; there is, properly speaking, no such thing here; it is rotten rubbish on a swamp; and at two feet you come to water. This last is detestable. The very ground has a bad odor, and the air is not vital. Two days before my presentation to the Emperor and Empress, I was taken with an ague. But my poor Juba lay at the point of death. His

was a clear case of black vomit; and I feel assured that in the month of August Havana or New Orleans would be as safe for a stranger as St. Petersburg. It is a Dutch town, with fresh-water-river canals, &c. To drink the water, is to insure a dysentery of the worst type."[1]

Upon arriving at St. Petersburg, Randolph promptly proceeded, after his presentation at court, to negotiate a treaty with Russia in relation to commerce and maritime rights which were the two special objects of his mission; but very soon his health, under the effects of his strange surroundings, became so bad that he was compelled to leave his post, and to take his feeble constitution to a milder air. Accordingly, he embarked at St. Petersburg for London on Sept. 7, 1830, delegating to John Randolph Clay, until his return, the duty of looking after the interests of the United States in Russia. So reduced was his condition at the time of his departure that he had to be lifted into the coach which took him to the steamboat that was to convey him to Cronstadt, and into the steamboat itself; and, even when he landed on the custom-house wharf at London, he was able to walk only a few steps.[2] Subsequently, in a letter to Martin Van Buren, Clay stated that, during the month preceding Randolph's departure, his disease had taken so decided a turn for the worst that all near him were seriously alarmed lest his dissolution was at hand.[3] (*a*) At one time, after he reached London, there was a slight improvement in his health, which, with his unconquerable resolution of purpose, enabled him to gratify some of the tastes to which England was always so successful in ministering. But his physical health, and, indeed, his mental health as well, were now hopelessly impaired; struggle as he might, to use his own later phrase, against snivelling his life away on a

[1] Garland, v. 2, 337.
[2] Letter from J. R. to Dr. B., Sept. 29, 1830, Garland, v. 2, 339.
[3] Oct. 1, 1830, Libr. Cong.

bed, like a breeding woman, instead of dying in harness with his spurs on.[1] On one occasion, he wrote to Clay from London that he could not walk at all without suffocation, and that his days (bad as they were) were heavenly to his nights.[2]

Shortly before he left England for the United States, after giving up the idea of returning to Russia, he had a hemorrhage from his lungs[3]; and, upon arriving in New York, after a "distressing" passage of six weeks from Portsmouth, on the *Hannibal*, he wrote to President Jackson: "I have passed the night without sleep in a high fever; almost incessantly coughing and expectorating blood."[4] A few days later, he wrote to the same correspondent, when he was on the point of proceeding from Baltimore to Roanoke by the most direct route: "I would go on to Washington, notwithstanding your permission to the contrary, if I were not a mass of disease and misery, disgusting to myself, and no doubt loathsome to others."[5]

When he landed at New York, his friend, Jacob Harvey, called on him and was greatly shocked at his cadaverous appearance. "His eagle eye," says Harvey, "detected by my countenance what was passing in my mind, and he said in a mournful tone of voice: 'Ah, Sir, I am going at last; the machine is worn out; nature is exhausted, and I have tried in vain to restore her.'"

"Why," replied I, forcing a smile, "you told me the same thing some years ago, and yet here you are still."

"True," rejoined he, "but I am seven years *nearer the grave*."[6]

In speaking of the amounts paid to Randolph as Minis-

[1] J. R. to A. J., Mar. 18, 1832, *Jackson Papers*, v. 80, Libr. Cong.
[2] Nov. 23, 1830, Clay MSS., Libr. Cong.
[3] J. R. to A. J., June 28, 1831, *Jackson Papers*, v. 78, Libr. Cong.
[4] *Id.*, Oct. 13, 1831, v. 79.
[5] *Id.*, Oct. 18, 1831, v. 79.
[6] *The New Mirror*, v. 2, 85.

ter to Russia, for which no legislative appropriation had been made when he left the United States, Henry Adams says in his *John Randolph:*

"In September, 1829, he was offered, and accepted a special mission to Russia; he sailed in June, 1830; remained 10 days at his post; then passed near a year in England, and, returning home in October, 1831, drew $21,407.00 from the Government, with which he paid off his old British debt. This act of Roman virtue, worthy of the satire of Juvenal, still stands as the most flagrant bit of jobbery in the annals of the United States Government."[1]

Randolph was paid a total sum of $21,207.71, made up as follows: for outfit $9,000.00; for salary, from June 9, 1830, to July 17, 1831, at the rate of $9,000.00 per annum, $9,957.71; and for the expenses of his return, $2,250.00.[2]

It is not true that he paid off his old British debt with any of this money. The final balance of that debt was completely discharged by him during the sittings of the Convention.[3] (*a*) Nor, when he sailed from the United States on his Russian Mission, were his personal finances in an embarrassed condition, as Bouldin seems to think; for, we know from a letter, which he wrote to Andrew Jackson at that time, that he had an amount equal to one-half of the outfit in bank, and enough money in anticipation from his last year's tobacco crop to pay the charges of the current year upon his estate; for, by God's blessing, he said (quite in the spirit of Franklin) he had kept clear of debt and thus had been able to preserve his independence.[4]

The judgment passed by Adams on Randolph in this matter is, of course, but a repetition of the abortive attack

[1] *The New Mirror*, p. 296.
[2] Bouldin, 158.
[3] *Reminiscences of J. R.*, by Dr. Kirkpatrick.
[4] Roanoke, June 8, 1830, MS., Libr. Cong.

that was made upon him by the partisans of John Quincy Adams and Clay in the House while he was still abroad.

On Jan. 12, 1831, Mr. Stanberry of Ohio, moved in the House to strike out the appropriation for the salary for a Minister to Russia in the Appropriation Bill then pending in the House, and this motion precipitated a debate, in which it was contended, on the one hand, that Randolph had deserted his post, and that it was really vacant; and, on the other, that his absence from it, under the circumstances, was entirely justifiable. By more than one party foe Randolph was assailed in the debate with intense acrimony, especially by Tristam Burges, of Rhode Island[1]; but he was not more trenchantly assailed than defended, and the motion came to nothing. Before it was disposed of, however, Mr. Cambreling, of New York, paid this glowing tribute to Randolph:

"I have listened, Sir, with delight and instruction to some of our distinguished rivals for parliamentary fame, to the simple but persuasive and fascinating reasoning of a Lowndes, to the melodious and impassioned eloquence of a Clay, to the lucid, commanding and solid argument of a Webster, but, for a combination and profusion of all the weapons of parliamentary war, of wit, irony, sarcasm, imagination, and eloquence, he [Randolph] was surpassed by none; nay, Sir, as a parliamentary orator, he was unequalled. He combined all the skill of a debater, the genius of a poet, with the patriotism and sound philosophy of a statesman. The People of this country owe him a large debt of gratitude. He was ever the vigilant enemy of power, and the devoted friend of our ancient and excellent constitution. With a political foresight and sagacity beyond any of his distinguished rivals for parliamentary honors, he detected in the embryo, and resisted with prophetic wisdom those measures which laid the basis of that gigantic accumulation of Federal power and taxation which we are now so zealously endeavoring to check and moderate."[2]

[1] *Reg. of Debates*, v. 7, 1830, 1831, 484.
[2] *Reg. of Debates*, v. 7, 1830, 1831, 502.

When news of the debate reached Randolph in London, he received it in the spirit that the terror formerly excited by his index-finger in the House naturally aroused.

"The barking of the curs against me in Congress," he wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough, I utterly despise. I think I can see how some of them, if I were present, would tuck their tails between their hind legs and slink—aye, and stink, too. Perhaps, the time may come when I may see some of them not face to face; for their eyes could not meet mine, I know by experience."[1]

In our judgment, the acceptance by Randolph of the sum allowed him for his salary, outfit, and return expenses is entirely reconcilable with the stainless probity which had marked the earlier stages of his public career; though his mind was so gravely affected, during the latter years of his life, that it would be unjust, in any view of the case, to hold him to the same measure of moral responsibility for his conduct then as before. No one, we are certain, can read a letter, headed "particularly private and confidential," which he wrote from St. Petersburg to President Jackson, without saying with Cowper in *The Task:*

"Kate is crazed"[2];

and, if he did not get down on his knees before the Empress or Emperor, it must be confessed that it might well have been simply because the mental state in which this letter was written was intermittent, and it was not until after his return from Russia that madness became for a time the habitual livery of his mind. In the letter, to which we refer, he told Jackson, whom he termed "Cincinnatus, the Warriour Ploughman," that he would "give $20,000" to be minister either at Paris or London, instead of being "in the Bastile, cut off by despotism from the surrounding

[1] Garland, v. 2, 342.

[2] Aug. 10, 1830, Libr. Cong. *Jackson Papers*, v. 75.

world." Randolph, of course, should never have been appointed Minister to Russia, and he should not have accepted the appointment when tendered to him. His uncalculating candor of character, his impetuous temper, his eccentric deportment, and the proneness of his mind to occasional derangement tended to unfit him for a diplomatic post even at an earlier stage of his career; and now to these disqualifications were added a highly precarious state of bodily health and a trembling mental balance which was in the succeeding year to be entirely lost. (*a*) Apparently, he had his own misgivings about the wisdom of acceptance. In his testimony in the litigation which arose out of the wills left by Randolph, Wm. Leigh, then Judge Leigh, said that, shortly after Jackson and Van Buren wrote to Randolph, offering him the appointment, Randolph sent their letters to him, and asked him to give him his best advice; that first by letter and then in conversation he suggested to Randolph reasons why he should not accept the offer; that, during the conversation, Randolph did not say what he intended to do, but, when Leigh left him, told him that he would let him know his conclusion as soon as he should have made up his mind; and that in the mail, which was borne by Randolph's door at Roanoke a few hours later, was a paper for Leigh, on which Randolph had written laconically "I go."[1] Randolph lived to realize that Judge Leigh was right. "This Russian campaign," he wrote to Andrew Jackson, after his return to the United States, "has been a Pultowa or Beresina to me, although I am neither Charles XII of Sweden nor Buonaparte, but a poor and half-ruined Virginia planter."[2] But, in passing upon the degree of discretion shown by Jackson in proffering, and by Randolph in accepting, the Russian Mission, we should bear

[1] Coalter's Executor *vs.* Randolph's Ex'r, Clerk's Office, Cir Ct., Petersburg, Va.

[2] Roanoke, Feb. 26, 1832, *Jackson Papers*, v. 80, Libr. Cong.

in mind that Jackson was not the kind of man to say insincerely what he had said in his letter making the proffer about Randolph's talents, public experience, and devotion to sound principles and the popular interests;[1] that Randolph was at the time of the tender but 57 years of age; and that, while his physical health had for many years been bad, and his sanity at times overthrown, he had recently been sound enough both corporeally and mentally to exercise a remarkable ascendancy over the Democrats in the House. Indeed, his health was unusually good for him when the Virginia Convention met a few days later. As for the inconsistency between the manner in which Randolph had scouted in his speech on Retrenchment and Reform the idea of his accepting a diplomatic office and his actual acceptance of the Russian Mission, it is enough to say that, while a nice sense of personal dignity should be careful to keep clear of inconsistency of this sort, even though it involves no breach of any moral obligation, a failure to do so is commonly regarded by a Democratic electorate as hardly less venial than the rash assertion of the girl in Sir Walter Scott's graceful little poem, *Nora's Vow*, who said that she would not marry the earlie's son, even were Ben Cruaichan to fall and crush Kilchurn, and Awe's fierce stream backward to turn, and yet lived to see herself married to him, though Ben Cruaichan stood as fast as ever, and Awe's fierce river still foamed downward to the sea. It is denied by no one that Randolph's physical condition was all but desperate when he left St. Petersburg, and that, if there was no hope for his recovery in a change of climate, there was no hope for his recovery at all. Why, then, whether his salary should have continued during his absence from St. Petersburg or not, should he not have received his outfit, which by right as he said in one of his letters to Andrew Jackson should have been in his pocket when he sailed from Hampton

[1] Garland, v. 2, 333.

Roads, if not sooner,[1] and the amount as well customarily allowed to our foreign ministers for the expenses of their return voyages? He, at least, did not charge the Federal Government, as John Quincy Adams did in 1814, when he had been one of our Peace Commissioners at Ghent, for the expenses of a return journey to his post at St. Petersburg which he had never actually made.[2] If he had left St. Petersburg without the justification of extreme ill health, or, if he had never returned to it without a good reason for not doing so, a very different case would be presented. But neither the one nor the other of these things is true. He left when he was almost in the article of death; he never sufficiently regained his health to make his return anything but an even greater risk than that which he had originally faced; and he did not return partly because he found that his health, though not in such an acutely critical condition as it was when he was at St. Petersburg, was steadily growing worse; and partly because, before the spring of 1831, when he expected to return, the fact had been established that, whether he was at St. Petersburg or not, there was no reasonable probability of his receiving from the Russian Court within any definite time any reply to the proposals arising out of the special character of his mission which he had made to the Russian Government immediately after his arrival in Russia. Nor can he be justly reproached for not realizing sooner, when in London, that his health was irretrievably bad and surrendering his mission; for, while, as he truly said afterwards on his deathbed, he had been sick all his life, the extraordinary resiliency of his constitution had repeatedly rescued him from what seemed to be a condition of almost hopeless physical prostration. Such was his indomitable vitality that Dr. Coleman tells us in his Diary that, even when Randolph found in his last hours

[1] Mar. 18, 1832, *Jackson Papers*, v. 80, Libr. Cong.

[2] *Reg. of Debates*, 1827–28, part 1, 1366.

that the frail case, which had been fretted by his proud and restless spirit for so many years, was at last really going to pieces, and was unequal to the strain of another transatlantic voyage, he was planning a trip to New England for the purpose of meeting Andrew Jackson, who happened to be there at that time. Leaving out of sight the sums received by Randolph for outfit and return expenses, the amount of the flagrant jobbery, against which Henry Adams inveighs, comes down to $9,957.71, or a sum just $957.71 in excess of the amount which John Quincy Adams did not scruple to accept for outfit in 1813, when, in addition to being our minister at St. Petersburg, he was made one of our Commissioners to negotiate peace with Great Britain, though, at that time, it was supposed that the peace conference would be held at St. Petersburg instead of at Ghent; in which event, of course, he would not have needed a second outfit to establish himself elsewhere at all.[1]

In our opinion, Randolph's right to receive the salary too is indisputable. In dealing with this question, it is important to remember that, whatever may have been its formal character, his mission was really a special one. The main purposes, for which he was appointed, were to negotiate a treaty between the United States and Russia, regulating the commercial intercourse between the two countries in accordance with just principles of reciprocity, and creating a working concert between them touching the new maxim that "free ships make free goods"; the proper definition of an effective blockade; and the proper specification of articles of contraband. This fact is made manifest by the terms of Jackson's letter, appointing Randolph, and of Randolph's letter of acceptance, and by the memorandum of instructions from the hand of Van Buren, as Secretary of State, which Randolph took with him when he left the United States. Indeed, in his very

[1] *Reg. of Debates*, v. 4, part 1, 1367.

censure of Randolph for receiving money which he had not fairly earned, Henry Adams speaks of the mission as a "special" one. Besides, at that time, the general duties of an American minister at St. Petersburg were of very little importance. All the papers of every sort that were handed over to Randolph as the papers of the American Legation, when he took charge there, were contained in a trunk 2 feet 8 inches long, 13 inches wide, and 9½ inches deep[1]; and, of these papers, only one was of any real moment. The others were mere waste. The whole value of the imports from Russia to the United States in the year 1830 amounted to but $1,621,899.00; and of the exports from the United States to Russia to only $35,461.00[2]; and, when Randolph was at St. Petersburg in that year, the United States had a Consul there to look after all such routine American interests involved in this volume of exchanges as might require care or protection. In a letter to Count Nesselrode, the Russian Vice-Chancellor, James Buchanan, who succeeded Randolph at St. Petersburg, stated that the American Consul at Odessa had written to him that but one American vessel had entered that port during the summer of 1832.[3] (*a*)

After Randolph left St. Petersburg, John Randolph Clay, who was an active and intelligent young man, first, as Secretary of Legation, and then, as Chargé d'Affaires, when promoted to that position by Randolph, remained on the ground to perform the routine functions of the American Minister, and to carry out such special instructions as Randolph might from time to time send him. It is not true that Randolph was at St. Petersburg only ten days, as Henry Adams states.[4] He arrived there on Aug. 10, 1830,[5] and he left there on Sept. 7, 1830;[6] which makes

[1] J. R. Clay MSS., Libr. Cong.
[2] *Works of James Buchanan*, Ed. by Jno. Bassett Moore, v. 2, 273.
[3] Oct. 11, 1832, *Id.*, v. 2, 249. [4] J. R., 296.
[5] J. R.'s Journal, Va. Hist. Soc., cited *supra*.
[6] Garland, v. 2, 339.

the interval between his arrival and departure 26 days. This was time enough, as the event demonstrated, to enable him to do all that it was possible for him or anyone to do then towards the accomplishment of the special objects of his mission. While he was at St. Petersburg, he applied himself with his usual untiring energy to his duties, and, before he left, he deposited with the Russian Government the general instructions to him in which the views of President Jackson were explained to him at full length, his full powers to treat as well on the subject of maritime rights as of navigation, and the memorandum drawn up for his guidance by Van Buren—everything in short that could develop the wishes and views of the Government of the United States,[1] except the *projet* of a proposed treaty in relation to maritime rights, which he, sick as he was, yet found enough strength on his way to London to instruct Clay to lay before the Imperial Ministry at such time and in such manner as His Highness, Prince Lieven, should be pleased to indicate.[2] Before he left St. Petersburg, he had drawn from Prince Lieven, through John Randolph Clay, at a time when he was too low to call in person on the Prince, the statement that the subject of Navigation and Commerce was one of great importance, and that he thought that it would be impossible to give an answer in time to meet the wishes of the President. To the diligence with which Randolph prosecuted the purposes of his mission, so long as he remained at St. Petersburg, James Buchanan afterwards testified in pointed terms. Writing to Edward Livingston, who was then Secretary of State, from St. Petersburg, Buchanan said:

"I found that Mr. Randolph, during his short residence in this city, had applied himself with energy and dispatch to accomplish the purposes of his mission. Within a short period

[1] J. R. to Clay, London, Nov. 23, 1830, J. R. Clay MSS., Libr. Cong.
[2] J. R. to Clay, Sept. 11, 1830, J. R. Clay MSS., Libr. Cong.

after his arrival, he had placed in the possession of the Russian Ministry 'every paper public and private' with which he had been intrusted touching the negotiation which the President had instructed him to open with this Government; and, notwithstanding this frankness, which was certainly the highest evidence of confidence, and, therefore, the greatest compliment which could have been paid to the Imperial Ministry; notwithstanding the earnest attempts made by Mr. Randolph, whilst he remained here, and continued by Mr. Clay afterwards, under his direction, to obtain an answer to the propositions he had made in behalf of his Government, no intimation has yet been given whether Russia would be willing to treat with us either upon the subject of Commerce and Navigation or that of Maritime Rights. Now, although, from all the circumstances attending the transaction, I am not disposed to attribute this omission to any want of proper respect towards the Government of the United States, yet I feel that it has placed me in an embarrassing situation. All my instructions (with the exception of those you have given me which are merely supplemental), together with the *projet* of the Treaty concerning Maritime Rights and a private letter of Mr. Van Buren to Mr. Randolph (a copy of which is on file in the Legation), are already in the possession of the Russian Ministry."[1]

In other words, Buchanan, as well as Randolph, found himself at St. Petersburg, to quote Hudibras, "Like words congeal'd in Northern air," and he could think of nothing better to add than to say:

"I shall not, for the present, ask Count Nesselrode for any answer to the propositions made by Mr. Randolph. I shall wait until I become better acquainted with the views and wishes of the Imperial Ministry before I introduce the negotiation to their attention, or do any act which can subject me to the charge of importunity."

And nothing could have been more assiduous than the efforts which Randolph, when in London, still made

[1] June 12, n.s., 1832, *Works of James Buchanan*, by Moore, v. 2, 195.

through Clay to obtain an answer from the Russian Ministry to the American proposals. When he left St. Petersburg, it was with the intention, pursuant to the license given him by President Jackson at the time of his appointment, of proceeding to the bland climate of Southern Europe; but, in a letter to John Randolph Clay, written after his arrival in London, he told Clay that he had delayed his journey to the South for the express purpose of a more ready and prompt communication with the Governments of Russia and the United States.[1]

Randolph's letters to President Jackson and John Randolph Clay, while he was in London, evince in the most striking manner his deep and haunting solicitude about the failure of the Russian Ministry to reply to the proposals. At last, he obtained from Count Nesselrode, the successor of Prince Lieven, a promise that an answer would be communicated to him through the latter who was to come to England as the Russian Minister at the Court of St. James[2]; but, when Prince Lieven came, he brought no reply with him[3]; nor was any reply ever sent by Count Nesselrode to Randolph, though anxiously awaited week after week in London by him, until Randolph was again in the United States when he received a letter from John Randolph Clay, stating that he had had an interview with Count Nesselrode, in the course of which the Count had declared that it was then "impossible for the Imperial Ministry to examine the proposal of the United States"[4]; nor was it until the month of June, 1832, that James Buchanan could induce the Russian minister even to take up the proposals with him. "He said," declares Buchanan, "that the affairs of Poland first and then those of Belgium had occupied so much of his time as to have

[1] London, Dec. 20, 1830, J. R. Clay MSS., Libr. Cong.

[2] J. R. to A. J., London, May 30, 1831, *Jackson Papers*, v. 77, Libr. Cong. [3] *Ibid.*

[4] J. R. to A. J., N. Y., Oct. 13, 1831, *Jackson Papers*, v. 79, Libr. Cong.

rendered it impossible for him to direct any attention to this business."[1] This is in keeping with what Randolph had long before written to Andrew Jackson from London: "Events have been very untoward for us—the French Revolution, that of Belgium, the *cholera morbus*, but, above all, the Polish Insurrection."[2] And it is difficult to see how, under the circumstances, he could have reached any other conclusion than the one that he reached in this letter:

"I do not consider that my own ill-health or absence from Russia have had any ill effect upon our negotiations. Before I left St. Petersburg, I had put the Imperial Ministry in full possession of all our views, and here I am conveniently situated for communicating with them as well as with my own Government."

So long as there was any definite prospect of a favorable reply to the American proposals, Randolph held himself ready to return to St. Petersburg at any hazard, unless the negotiation was transferred to London, as he seems to have thought at one time, it is significant to state in connection with the charge made against him of indefensible absence from his post, that it might be.[3]

"Such is my sense of duty to my country, and of the kind indulgence of the President," Randolph wrote to Clay, "that in case there shall be any well-founded hope of success in either of our objects I shall repair to St. Petersburg in May; although I consider it as removing the last slender chance of my recovery. If, however, the dispositions manifested by the Imperial Ministry should leave no just ground of expectation that we may succeed, my return would be an idle and ostentatious exposure of my personal safety and comfort."[4]

[1] *Works of James Buchanan*, by Moore, v. 2, 212.
[2] London, Jan. 5, 1831, *Jackson Papers* v. 76, Libr. Cong.
[3] J. R. to Clay, London, Nov. 23, 1830, J. R. Clay MSS., Libr. Cong.
[4] London, Jan. 15, 1831, J. R. Clay MSS., Libr. Cong.

Finally, however, discouraged by the persistent silence of the Russian Ministry, Randolph decided that he should ask for his recall, and, accordingly, he sent to President Jackson the following letter, dated April 6, 1831, which bears witness not only to the honorable motives by which he had been governed in his relations to the Russian Mission, but also to the kind heart of Andrew Jackson:

"In your letter of the 3d. of December last, you most kindly invited me 'to speak my feelings and wishes in regard to the future without reserve, and to count with confidence on the steadiness of your friendship for me.' At the time when I received that letter, I had sanguine hopes of being able to return to Russia in the Spring, and accordingly wrote to you to that effect. But, subsequently, my health has been so entirely undermined that I despair of my ability to do so. I cannot express to you the anxiety and distress which I have endured from reflecting on this circumstance. It amounts, at times, to intense misery. As you were so good as to put my return to St. Petersburgh upon the contingencies 'that my health would admit of it, and that I should have reason to believe that I would be able to accomplish the whole, or part of what was desired,' I feel some consolation; for I see not the most distant prospect of success (at present) in either object.

"I must, therefore, my dear Sir, avail myself of your indulgent invitation 'to let you know my wishes freely' and to request that 'the necessary directions may be sent to me without delay.' I regret most deeply that I have delayed this communication so long. I have been cheated by the delusions of Hope. I have now none left but that I may be permitted to lay my bones in my native land."[1]

It was not until the 26th day of June that Randolph received a letter from the President consenting to his resignation, and from the Secretary of State the official communication requisite to enable him to bring his mission

[1] London, Apr. 6, 1831, *Jackson Papers*, v. 77, Libr. Cong.

to an end.[1] On July 17, he handed his letter of recall to Prince Lieven in London,[2] and, on Sept. 1, he embarked for home from Portsmouth.[3] On one page of his *John Randolph*, Henry Adams states that Randolph passed near a year in England[4]; six pages later he states that Randolph accepted the Russian Mission, to remain in England for about 18 months. His chronology is a little confusing. "Panting time," to quote Dr. Samuel Johnson's sonorous line, "toils after him in vain." From what we have already written, it will be seen that Randolph arrived in England on Sept. 29, 1830, and wrote to President Jackson on April 6, 1831, expressing his desire to be recalled; which makes the duration of his stay in England, so far as it is material in connection with the charge of jobbery preferred against Randolph by Adams, 189 days, or a few days in excess of six months. If Randolph was entitled to salary until the President's letter of recall reached him, he was certainly entitled to salary until July 17, the date when his salary actually ceased; that is to say for such a reasonably longer time as was necessary to enable him to close the affairs of his mission before sailing for the United States. Randolph was far from being an impeccable individual; but it is safe to say that no writer, however partisan, or revengeful will ever successfully traduce his public honor.

[1] J. R. to A. J., London, June 28, 1831, *Jackson Papers*, v. 78, Libr. Cong.
[2] *Id.* to Clay, London, July 17, 1831, J. R. Clay MSS., Libr. Cong.
[3] *Id.* to A. J., N. Y., Oct. 13, 1831, *Jackson Papers*, v. 79, Libr. Cong.
[4] P. 296.

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